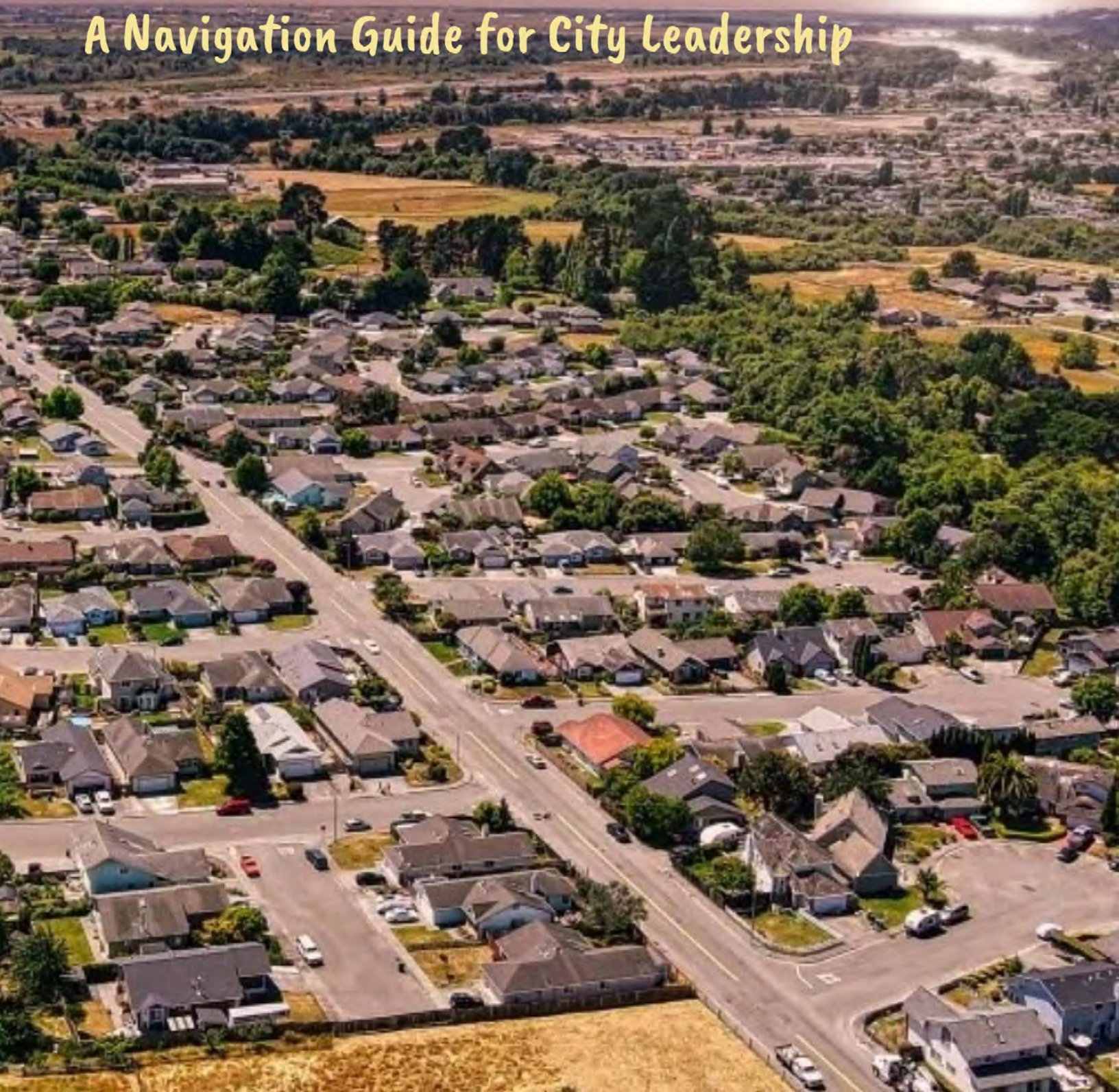




City of Fortuna

Strategic Plan 2026 – 2036: *A Navigation Guide for City Leadership*



City of Fortuna Strategic Plan 2026–2036:

A Navigation Guide for City Leadership

Prepared by Jen Rice Consults for the City of Fortuna • June 2026

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Introduction

This Strategic Plan is a working guide for City staff and Council, designed to be used at the table, not stored on a shelf. It grew from nearly a year of listening — and from the genuine common ground that emerged across community members of diverse constituencies, business owners, staff, and Council. It guides how staff and Council set priorities, make decisions, allocate resources, learn, and adapt together — whoever is leading, whatever comes.

Every element in this plan emerged from the most comprehensive community listening process in Fortuna’s history: 63 people were engaged during interviews and two focus groups in the fall, then roughly 150 people during two community workshops, 155 online, 64 in a community-led business survey, plus staff and Council workshops. The consistency across those voices is the mandate behind this plan.

How to use this document

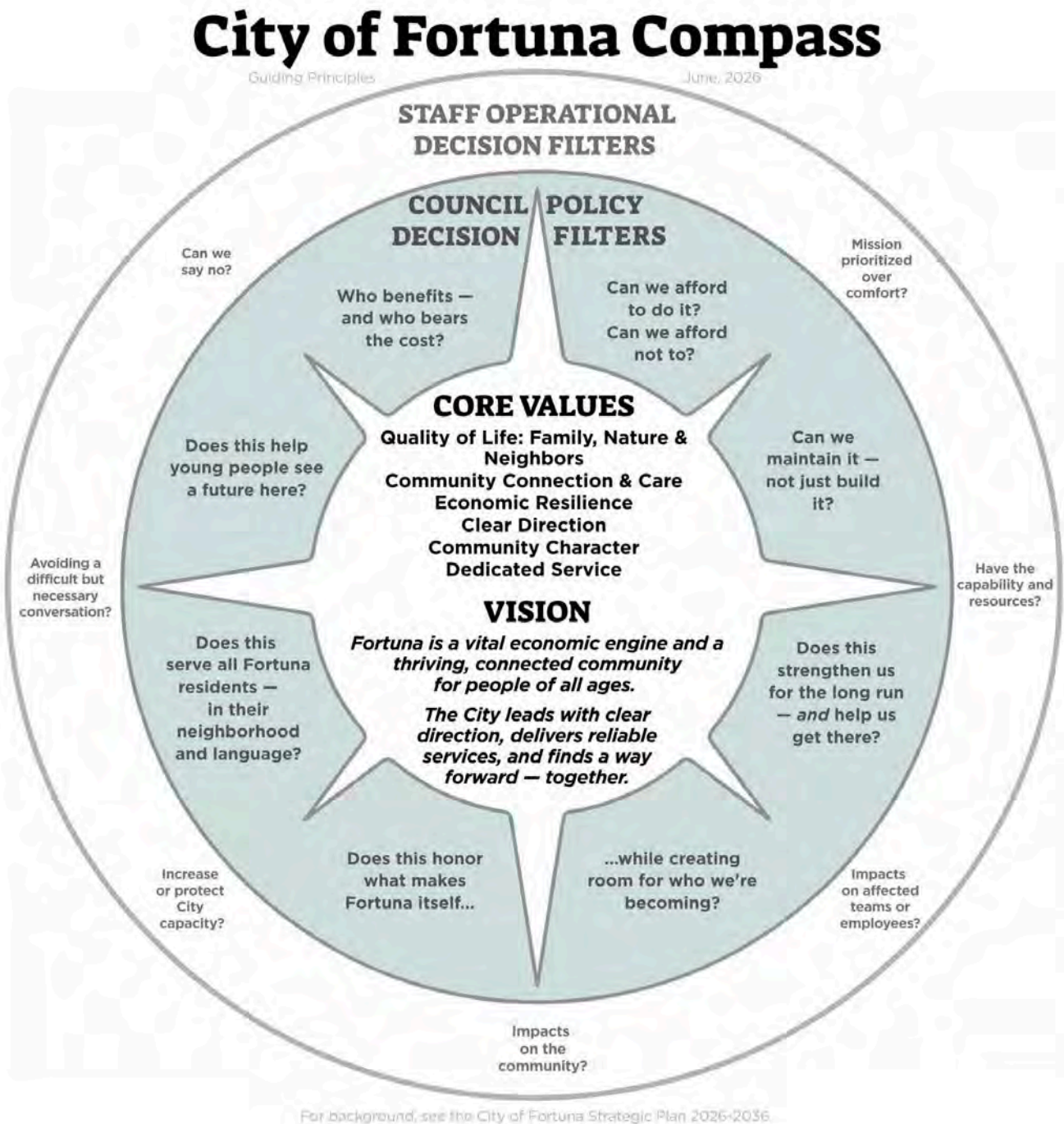
1. **The Compass** is a pull-out tool for every staff report, every Council orientation packet, every leadership meeting, and every significant decision.
2. **Why This Plan, Why Now** provides clarity and context about the mandate behind the plan.
3. **Priorities** tell you where the City is headed and what it is committed to. Commitments are organized by urgency, with clear performance tracking guidelines.
4. **This Plan in Practice** tells you how this document connects to department work plans, budgeting, Council proposals, and hiring.
5. **The Ideas Bank** is for directors and partners: promising ideas from the process that are not yet first-priority commitments.



1. The Fortuna Compass

The Compass is the most durable result of this planning process. Why a Compass? A compass doesn't tell you where to go, it helps you find your way once you decide, regardless of the surrounding conditions. It is a graphic tool representing the City's guiding principles in practice. Every Council member (5/5) and many staff and community members interviewed said a version of the same thing: Fortuna needs direction that doesn't leave when a City Manager does. The Compass is that direction — not a personality, not one leader's goals, but shared principles the City owns together and uses to navigate — consistently, transparently, over time.

City leadership may determine the Compass needs to be updated or reformatted at some point, and departments or staff are welcome to adapt it to their specific needs in a way that is consistent with the master version.



City Vision

Fortuna is a vital economic engine and a thriving, connected community for people of all ages. The City leads with clear direction, delivers reliable services, and finds a way forward, together.

In an online poll with 128 participants responding, 88% said Fortuna needs a vision. Community workshop participants ranked economic engine first; a community poll initiated at the first workshop, with a strong showing from Fortuna high school students, ranked a connected community first. Both lead this vision, because Fortuna residents across generations repeated them again and again. The need for a clearer sense of direction, vision, or plan was widely stated across interviews and earning the top priority rank in the online poll between workshops. Reliably “making civilization possible” was a point of staff pride. “Finding a way forward – together” is from two sources: 1) staff, during interviews and workshops, noted that being adaptable and accomplishing a lot with few resources (or being “scrappy”) is an essential part of their operating culture; and 2) during (and the week after) the first community workshop online poll, this sentiment ranked second highest in importance.

Core Values

What is uniquely important to this community for every action the City takes?

Quality of Life: Family, Nature & Neighbors	Safety, family life, care for youth, cleanliness, parks, forests, and river. Fortuna’s #1 value across every instrument and generation in this process.
Community Connection & Care	Close-knit feel, big community events, volunteering, showing up for each other.
Economic Resilience	The status quo is not sustainable. Generating City revenue is essential to keeping City services and investing in what Fortuna residents want.
Clear Direction	Consistent decisions based on shared principles that outlast any one leader. Every Council member interviewed named this as essential.
Community Character	Keeping the historic feel, charm, and access to the outdoors — while making room for growth that supports Fortuna’s identity and priorities.
Committed Service	Recognition that staff put care into their hard work to provide vital and efficient services, are appreciated by the community, and deserve support.

These values were not assigned by the consultant or the City Manager. They were the words that appeared repeatedly, across every engagement method and every group when participants were asked open-ended questions about what matters most to this community. Quality of Life ranked #1 as a value in every instrument, every generation, and both language polls. Clear Direction was named as essential by all five Council members when interviewed independently.

City Purpose Statement

This statement will be developed by a staff team within 90-days of plan adoption. A Mission Statement describes what an organization *does*. A Purpose Statement describes *why it matters*. In our fast-changing world, purpose is what guides people when rules don’t cover new situations. Purpose helps a diverse team of departments and individuals pull in the same direction as the world around them changes.

This statement should appear at the opening of every Council meeting, in job postings, and in new Council member and employee onboarding materials.

Council-Level Policy Decision Filters

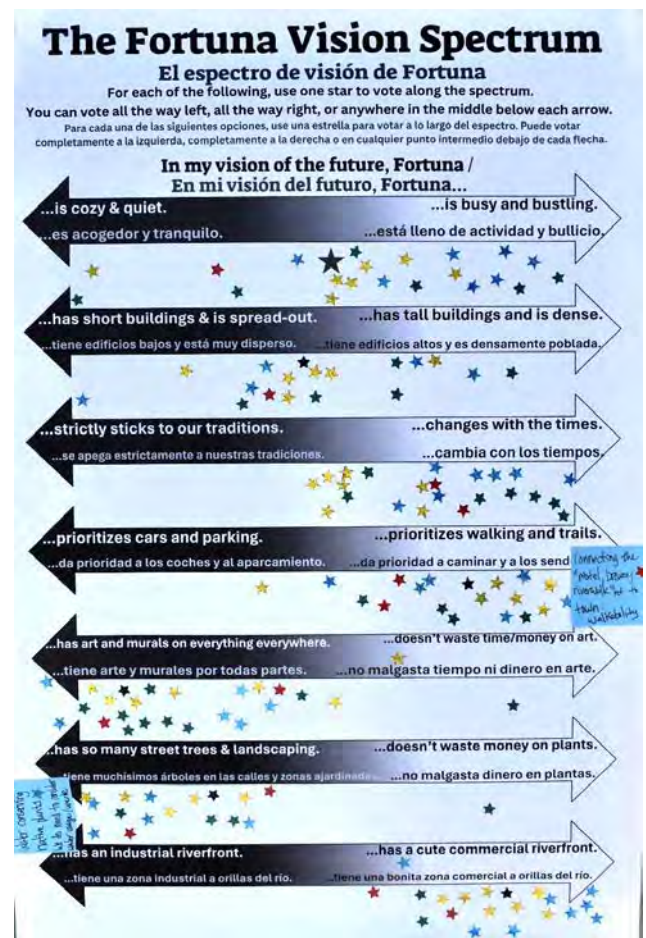
Questions that arose in the process for staff and Council to use when facing important decisions. Not a checklist — a discipline. Ask these questions to foster critical thinking and to guide discussion before recommending or approving significant actions.

- Does this help young people see a future here?
- Who benefits, and who bears the cost?
- Can we afford to do it? Can we afford not to?
- Can we maintain it, not just build it?
- Does this serve all Fortuna residents in their neighborhoods and languages?
- Does this honor what makes Fortuna itself while creating room for who we're becoming?

Staff-Level Operational Decision Filters

Staff have been using these filters since November 2025 and find them genuinely helpful in preparing proposals. The more they are practiced, the more automatic they become.

- Mission prioritized over comfort?
- Avoiding a difficult but necessary conversation?
- Can we say no?
- Have the capability and resources?
- Increase or protect City capacity?
- Does this strengthen us for the long run — and help us get there?
- Impacts on the community?
- Impacts on affected employees?



The widespread drive to balance an orientation toward both Fortuna's history and its future arose throughout the listening process, starting from when staff and community interviewers first practiced interview techniques. 71% of 128 poll participants during and after the first community workshop said the City needs to look to both the past AND the future when developing a vision. The "Vision Spectrum" poster is often noted to be a singularly insightful and representative result of the workshops.

2. Why This Plan, Why Now

The Honest Picture

Fortuna is a city that works hard against structural headwinds. The industries that once generated reliable revenue — timber, cannabis — have contracted. General Fund revenue has been declining for five years. The City has been subsidizing development with fees well below comparable jurisdictions. Infrastructure deferred too long now costs multiples of what earlier investment would have. Staff retention is fragile. And there is no dedicated economic development function.

At the same time, something rare happened during this process: genuine agreement across groups that rarely land in the same room. Community members, teens, business owners, Spanish-speaking families, City staff, and Council members named the same priorities — independently, across months. That agreement is political resilience and the foundation this plan is built on.

What Makes This Plan Different

Most strategic plans can easily become outdated or irrelevant because they only ask one question: did we do what we said? This plan asks: is what we are doing actually working? That distinction matters because Fortuna is navigating real uncertainty — economic pressure, budget realities, state mandates, leadership transitions. No one can predict the perfect path in advance. Strategic plans also fail when they feel like a pile of new obligations rather than a tool for doing existing work better and with clearer purpose. Shared principles enable staff to know they are headed in the right direction while trying things, learning from what happens, and adjusting course together.

This plan is designed as a **tool to help the City learn faster than the challenges accumulate** instead of the more traditional approach to static “compliance” planning and operations. Every Priority includes not just commitments but a *performance tracking* pair: an Action Trigger or occurrence that prompts a specific response when conditions change, and Check-In Questions structured for the team to ask regularly and evaluate whether the approach is working or needs modification. These are not novel add-ons, they are what keeps this plan alive and useful.

The Strong Community & Staff Voice This Plan Is Built On

Community members, teens, business owners, Spanish-speaking families, City staff, and Council members named the same priorities — independently, across months, using different words and different methods. That cross-source consistency is not an artifact of facilitation or framing. It is what happened.

The table in the Appendix summarizes findings across nine instruments of listening and engagement — interviews, focus groups, community workshops, online polling, and staff and Council working sessions — organized by the Strategic Plan’s nine priorities. A few patterns are worth naming here.

- In the between-workshops online poll (162 respondents, in English and Spanish), 88% said Fortuna needs a vision and 66% didn’t know if one ever existed.
- Quality of life, as Fortuna residents define it, was the top-ranked value in every instrument and across every generation and language.
- Economic development and revenue generation emerged independently as the most urgent priority, named first or near-first by community members, staff, Council members, the immigrant focus group, and the teen focus group alike.
- Young people’s needs appeared at every collaboration station in both community workshops – all but one, without being asked. Youth needs were named by adults across age groups, and teens named their own.
- Pedestrian safety issues, including the 12th Street and Newburg intersections, were raised as a safety concern in community interviews, the immigrant focus group, and teen focus group independently, without cross-pollination between those sessions.



The staff and community engagement in this process is not a statistical sample of Fortuna's population, and it is not designed to be. It is a broad, multi-method effort to hear from a diverse variety of the community (and staff), including people the City doesn't often reach like teens, Spanish-speaking families, and local business owners, alongside residents and staff who often do show up. The same priorities surfaced in response to open questions, regardless of who was speaking. That **consistency is what makes this plan's direction defensible**. When resources are thin and decisions are hard, this kind of clarity is rare. When it exists, it is both a basis for action and protection against the inevitable pressure to relitigate settled questions.

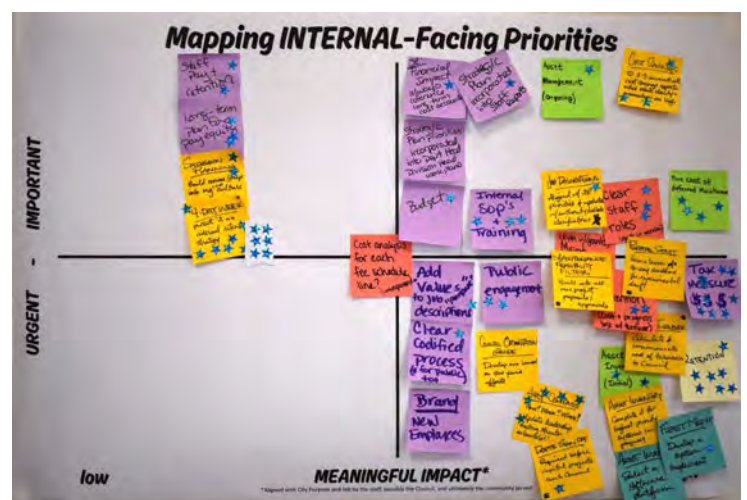
For detailed findings organized by topic and method, see the *City of Fortuna Listening Campaign Report* and the *Future Fortuna Workshops Report*.

3. Priorities

Nine Priority areas emerged through the full engagement process — community interviews, focus groups, business survey, community workshops, and online poll — and were iteratively explored and refined during two staff and one staff-Council working sessions. The Priorities that follow are organized with internal commitments first, because the City's ability to deliver anything external depends on a high-functioning City Hall. A regular cycle of feedback and learning is described in Section 4: This Plan In Practice.

Each Priority is structured to include the following:

- **Where We're Headed** describes the future state the City is working toward — specific enough to be meaningful, durable enough to outlast budget cycles.
- **Near-Term Commitments** are actions the City is committing to within two years.
- **Longer-Term Direction** describes where the Priority is headed over ten years — less prescribed, because conditions will change, yet identifies the target to work toward.
- **Council and/or Partner Roles** names the specific asks that staff cannot fulfill alone.
- **Performance Tracking** is where this plan departs most clearly from the strategic plans of old. Each Priority includes two tools that, together, are what keeps this a working document rather than a record of good intentions:
 - o **Action Triggers** — a pre-agreed condition that automatically triggers a specific response when it is crossed, removing the need to debate the condition mid-crisis. Action Triggers are about staying on course.
 - o **Check-In Questions** — (a) structured question(s) the leadership team asks itself on a regular cycle to evaluate whether the approach is actually working. Check-In Questions are about whether the course itself is still the right one.



Priority 1: Clarity, Culture & Capacity for Organizational Health

The mud in the water is starting to clear up. — City staff

Organizational health topics were named during 16 of 19 staff interviewees and by 4 of 5 Council members. It was a dominant theme of top priorities in both staff workshops.

Where We’re Headed

The City operates from shared values and clear roles. Every staff member understands how their work connects to Fortuna’s purpose and direction. The Compass is a working tool — not just a laminated wall display — embedded in how staff prepare proposals, run meetings, and onboard new colleagues. Leadership meetings focus on strategy, not just status reports.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 1N1. Develop a City Purpose Statement: staff team, 90-day deadline from plan adoption; embed in Council meetings, job postings, and onboarding ☐ 1N2. Rewrite job descriptions aligned with Strategic Plan priorities and Core Values, including staff development pathways and accountability measures ☐ 1N3. Redesign department director meetings to center on Strategic Plan implementation, not reporting, and organize department meetings to feed into/from director meetings ☐ 1N4. Update the Council Orientation Guide built from this year’s process ☐ 1N5. Require Compass review in all major staff reports before Council, including multi-department analysis where issues reach across the organization ☐ 1N6. Implement time-tracking to capture true operational costs by department	☐ 1L1. Succession planning conversations embedded at department level ☐ 1L2. Annual review of organizational structure relative to City priorities ☐ 1L3. Strategic Plan incorporated into all work plans, performance reviews, and hiring criteria

Council Role

Council sets policy; staff executes within that direction. Trusting staff to make operational and ministerial decisions based on clear policy direction is empowering staff while retaining accountability — it is the appropriate division of roles. When pulling agenda items, give staff maximum advance notice and name the driving question and related Compass principle/s.

Organizational Health: Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: If director meetings go a quarter without explicitly referencing and tracking progress and learning contributing toward a Strategic Plan Priority, the City Manager conducts a structured review of meeting design.

Biannual Check-In Questions: Is the Compass actually changing how decisions get made?
What would we need to change to tell the difference between a plan we have and a plan that helps us be and do our best?

Notes about questions, coordination needs, compass consistency, and updates to the longer-term direction:

Priority 2: Our People — Staff Retention, Pay & Succession

I stay because the people I work with — we have each other's back. — Staff interviewee

Staffing, compensation, and succession came up unprompted in 17 of 19 staff interviews and 3 of 5 Council member interviews. Workforce and staffing emerged as important near-term priorities in the April 2026 staff workshop and as a top theme in the independent community-led survey of 64 Fortuna businesses. In the between-workshops poll, “young people leaving — not enough jobs or housing” ranked third among urgent issues (ranked #1 by 14% of respondents in English). Multiple staff interviewees and workshop participants named it as the issue most likely to undermine every other Priority if left unaddressed.

Where We’re Headed

The City is known as a solid employer. Competitive pay, a strong culture, and clear career paths make Fortuna a place people choose to stay. Turnover is treated as a cost the Council understands and takes seriously — not a background condition.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 2N1. Calculate and communicate full cost of turnover (recruitment, training, lost institutional knowledge) as a standard part of every compensation conversation ☐ 2N2. Develop a competitive compensation and growth roadmap tied to revenue growth milestones ☐ 2N3. Protect the 4-day work week explicitly as a retention strategy, named as such in City communications ☐ 2N4. Identify and document highest-risk positions for succession vulnerability, prioritizing roles with significant institutional knowledge or specialized expertise ☐ 2N5. Morale and team-building investment is practical, not optional ☐ 2N6. Build formal cross-department coordination time into meeting structures ☐ 2N7. Conduct, collect, analyze, and apply results of exit interviews; check in with new staff about what is keeping them here	☐ 2L1. Employee pay within 10% of comparable jurisdictions ☐ 2L2. Living wage for every position ☐ 2L3. Clear internal advancement pathways ☐ 2L4. Staff development and training as a standard budget line ☐ 2L5. Explore retention incentives such as stipends and bonuses that are time-vested and/or tied to achieving priority objectives

Council Role

Competitive pay is critical — Council must treat it as a priority, not a wish. The cost of not acting is compounding and calculable. Staff will provide the numbers.

Our People: Performance Tracking

Action Triggers: If annual turnover exceeds a threshold set at first plan review of ____% (TBD), Council receives a full cost-of-turnover analysis before any budget decision affecting compensation.

Check-in : Annually: What are we learning about why people stay or leave?
Have our assumptions about what drives retention held up — or do we need to revise them?

Priority 3: Fiscal Foundation — Revenue, Cost Accounting & Honest Commitments

If I find a way to save money or earn more money for the City, it really is benefiting the whole community.

— Staff interviewee

Fiscal honesty and revenue sustainability appeared in 14 of 19 community interviews and all 5 Council member interviews — and was the only priority where Council members and community members converged with equal intensity. In the between-workshops poll, responsible fiscal management ranked among the top three priorities for the next one-to-two years across all respondent groups.

Where We're Headed

The City knows exactly what everything costs — not just to build, but to operate and maintain over its full life. Legacy commitments that cost more than they return are honestly evaluated. New commitments consider both a maintenance plan and potential funding options for ongoing costs. City fees reflect the real cost of services.

A new ¾-cent sales tax measure will be on the November 2026 ballot. This is in addition to Measure E, also a ¾-cent sales tax. Measure E expires in 2033. An additional ¾-cent sales tax will help maintain essential services as the City transitions to a Fortuna that generates enough revenue through economic vitality that it can begin to invest in its future. The measure's value to the community is clearest when paired with a specific spending plan. This is a bridge, not a foundation.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Yrs)
☐ 3N1. ¾-Cent Sales Tax Measure: ☐ 3N1a. Council helps form a volunteer committee to coordinate community education and canvasses door to door using tested messaging – transition this committee into an oversight function that helps bring in partners, communicates progress, and provides real-time feedback to the City ☐ 3N1b. Police Chief, City Manager, and Finance Director lead community education on the difference between the tax measure as a bridge and economic development as the destination ☐ 3N1c. Use tested community messaging ☐ 3N1d. Develop a specific, public-facing spending plan that shows what the measure funds and how it is essential to achieving Fortuna's Vision ☐ 3N2. Complete asset inventory for highest-priority systems; required consultation and recommendation from department tasked with maintenance before any capital project reaches Council ☐ 3N3. Implement time-tracking that captures real operational costs — start with departments where the data gap is largest ☐ 3N4. Update and act on River Lodge & Museum decision processes: evaluate full-burdened costs, community use value, and alternatives ☐ 3N5. Audit and review fee schedule annually to ensure updated fully-burdened rates and full cost recovery, where appropriate ☐ 3N6. Educate Council and public on the structural difference between General Fund and Enterprise fund revenue ☐ 3N7. Conduct structured reviews of inherited legacy commitments (programs, facilities, agreements) against their current cost-benefit profile ☐ 3N8. Consistently apply fee schedule for all user groups and applicants ☐ 3N9. Negotiate with Humboldt County to increase Fortuna's share of property tax, currently the lowest of any local jurisdiction	☐ 3L1. Revenue growth roadmap: ☐ 3L1a. What milestones unlock what City investments? ☐ 3L1b. Revenue growth goal: tax revenue provides a bridge to a point where economic development generates sufficient revenue to meet ambitious investment goals beyond the basics ☐ 3L1c. Communicate explicitly and publicly that residents invested in a plan, and they should see and feel progress ☐ 3L1d. Plan for the renewal of Measure E in 2033. ☐ 3L2. Level of Service framework applied to all budget conversations with Council ☐ 3L3. Explore feasibility of annexation south of Highway 36 ☐ 3L4. Consider establishing (an) endowment/s with community donors to raise needed a sustainable fund for priority amenities

Continued

Priority 3: Fiscal Foundation, continued

Council Role

Council needs to be clear and consistent on addressing legacy decisions that cost more than the City can currently justify spending and be aware of the impacts of deferred maintenance decisions.

Council must support this new measure publicly, individually, and loudly, canvass, and help establish a volunteer committee. ***This is the most time-sensitive item in the plan.***

The City can turn this around with Council supporting staff, and making decisions for the public good using the Compass as a guide.

Fiscal Performance Tracking

Action Triggers: No capital project or grant acquisition advances to Council without this non-negotiable process requirement: 1) maintenance department's recommendation, 2) funded life-cycle cost estimate, and 3) maintenance plan.

Check-In Questions:

Annually: Which of our inherited commitments have changed in their cost-benefit calculus? What do we do about that this year?

Long-term: Which inherited commitments — programs, facilities, agreements — have we evaluated this year against their true cost and community return? What did we do with what we found?

Tax Measure Performance Tracking

Action Triggers:

Measure passes: spending plan and volunteer oversight committee activated immediately.

Measure fails: City Manager convenes a strategy session on the fiscal path forward within 30 days.

Check-In Question: Are our outreach strategies reaching the right audiences and sharing relatable stories, including Spanish-speaking residents and renters who may not connect tax revenue to services they use?

Notes about questions, coordination needs, compass consistency, and updates to the longer-term direction:

Priority 4: Economic Development to Build Fortuna’s Future

The City of Fortuna is part of my American dream. — Community listening campaign participant

Economic development ranked as the top priority in every instrument across this process — named first or near-first by community members, Council, staff, teens, and the immigrant focus group, each independently.

Where We’re Headed

Fortuna has a clear identity and the City is actively pursuing economic revitalization. Economic development does not happen by accident — it is a core City function with staff time, a strategy, and partners. We know what kind of development we are after and are actively pursuing it.

Infrastructure is complete for the Mill Site to be development ready. Residents work, spend, and invest locally. Affordable workforce housing is treated as an economic development issue: the City connects workers to options and county/state assistance programs. The GPU is designed to facilitate desired, revenue- and local employment-contributing development, as well as housing types that help workers and their households stay in Fortuna.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Long-Term Direction (10 Years)
❑ 4N1. Establish a City economic development function, including a plan for dedicated staff time and partnerships before a new position is funded ❑ 4N2. Create and/or participate in an economic development working group with diverse community perspectives that acts on community survey data, in partnership with the Chamber, economic development partners, and City staff ❑ 4N3. Develop Fortuna’s economic identity and brand — define who we are chasing and why, including options for targeted Fortuna-niche-specific economic development in the GPU process (such as maximizing identity as a sports/trails/outdoors town, healthcare hub, or other potential regional draws ❑ 4N4. Create a draft vision for Downtown Fortuna that fits the economic identity and brand ❑ 4N5. Streamline and incentivize process for “right-fit” businesses ❑ 4N6. Review inherited economic programs for revenue and community value ❑ 4N7. Prioritize Mill Site development prerequisites: infrastructure funding, environmental clearances, zoning ❑ 4N8. Advance Kenmar and Ross Hill roundabout projects ❑ 4N9. Develop a partnership with the McLean Foundation and/or other public/private foundations to help each other attract resources, including donors, who will support pursuit of high priority community endeavors/amenities, including pool development	❑ 4L1. Roundabouts complete at Kenmar, Ross Hill, and 12th Street ❑ 4L2. Develop a ~1% CDBG-style loan program for business property improvements ❑ 4L3. Lower Eel River Park and river access ❑ 4L4. Mill Site with active commercial/light industrial development ❑ 4L5. Economic focus areas in play: e.g. family-focused, outdoor recreation/sports events; skills/ entrepreneurship; healthcare services; agritourism

Continued

Council Role

Free up staff time for economic development — too many boards and committees are consuming capacity without real benefit. Allocate and protect budget and time. Infrastructure money for the Mill Site is the investment priority.

Economic Development Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: If Mill Site prerequisite conditions (infrastructure, zoning) will not be in place by the summer of 2029, the City Manager reports to Council with a revised timeline and explicit resource ask.

Check-In Questions:

Annually: Which economic development strategies are showing traction?

Are we pursuing the right economic identity for Fortuna, or has the landscape shifted in ways that require a pivot?

Long-term: Is our economic identity and how it has influenced the development types we decided to pursue and why — still the right one?

What has changed in the regional economy, in development interest, or in community priorities that should inform whether we stay the course or pivot?

Notes about questions, coordination needs, compass consistency, and updates to the longer-term direction:

Priority 5: A Development-Ready City — Permitting, Design & Standards

Design standards result in cohesive and vibrant citywide developments that reflect Fortuna's character: residents and businesses are proud and we attract economic activity. — Staff

Permitting process and development standards frustration surfaced in 11 of 19 community interviews and 13 of 19 staff interviews. Permitting process delays and regulatory barriers were cited as one of four top cross-sector obstacles by developers, industrial operators, healthcare leaders, and downtown merchants alike in the independent community-led survey of 64 Fortuna businesses — alongside housing, downtown vitality, and economic diversification as the survey's dominant themes.

Where We're Headed

Building in Fortuna is predictable, fair, and fast for the right projects. Design standards are clear and objective. The Planning Commission has a Compass and uses it. Fortuna's character is protected through standards — not used as a barrier to good development. Quality developments that Fortuna needs are emerging, and they are contributing to City revenue, employment opportunities, and necessary local infrastructure and amenities.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 5N1. Complete permit process audit; eliminate pre-design steps without value ☐ 5N2. Establish predictable permit timelines and communicate them to applicants ☐ 5N3. Develop and adopt clear and objective design standards for Main Street and Fortuna Boulevard — don't wait for the GPU ☐ 5N4. Establish a simple, transparent fee schedule ☐ 5N5. Require pre-applications for large projects with clear checklists ☐ 5N6. Explore developing a library of pre-approved residential plan sets to streamline ADU and infill permitting ☐ 5N7. Train Planning Commission to seriously evaluate project design; co-create and apply their version of the Compass ☐ 5N8. Apply for and offer façade improvement grants ☐ 5N9. Develop incentive pathways for owner-occupied low- and moderate-income housing development.	☐ 5L1. Ministerial (by-right) approval path for projects meeting adopted design standards ☐ 5L2. "Right-fit" framework: clear incentive pathways for desired development types ☐ 5L3. Planning Commission routinely applies Compass principles — decisions are consistent and defensible

Council Role

Trust staff to make ministerial decisions based on approved design standards and process improvements already reviewed by Planning Commission and City Council. Hold developers accountable for application quality at time of submittal. At the dais, community direction is clear: protect Fortuna's character *and* attract the right kind of growth.

Development-Ready Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: If permit timelines are exceeded by more than ____ days (TBD) on average in a quarter, the Community Development Director figures out what's causing the delays and reports back to the City Manager with a plan to fix them.

Check-In Questions: Annually: Are our design standards producing the character we want?

- Are they creating barriers we didn't intend?
- What are the Planning Commission and developers telling us about how standards are working in practice?

Priority 6: Parks, Trails & Outdoors — Fortuna’s Natural Advantage

Beloved and highly used. — Staff, on the current state of Fortuna’s parks

Parks, trails, and outdoor access surfaced at every community workshop collaboration station and in 14 of 19 community interviews as the broadest demographic spread of any quality-of-life priority across the engagement process. A connected trail system – specifically Riverwalk Trail restoration and connectivity to the Great Redwood Trail – were among the opportunities with the most support at the Outdoors & Public Spaces station across both community workshops.

Where We’re Headed

Fortuna’s parks, trails, and river access are well-maintained, connected, and a genuine economic asset. No new outdoor facility is approved without a maintenance plan and funded ongoing costs. The Eel River and Great Redwood Trail corridor are protected and activated as Fortuna’s most significant natural resources.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 6N1. New commitments consider both a maintenance plan and identification of ongoing funding ☐ 6N2. Maintenance plan required for all current project proposals ☐ 6N3. Define the City’s role on the Great Redwood Trail: what it can and cannot sustain, what roles the Public Works and Parks & Recreation Departments each play, and consider the need for a Trails Master Plan given the scope, scale, and potential economic role these facilities play in Fortuna, and the need for guidance about planning and requirements for trail easements ☐ 6N4. Consider establishment of a volunteer corps and possibly an endowment to leverage very high community goodwill and assist with maintaining and even building basic new amenities ☐ 6N5. Explore how to attract overnight visitors — trail-adjacent lodging, hospitality connections — as part of the broader economic development strategy	☐ 6L1. Connected trail system from downtown to river ☐ 6L2. Robust volunteer parks and trail maintenance program ☐ 6L3. Regional sports event destination at Newburg Park ☐ 6L4. Lower Eel River Park development with river access

Council Role

A dedicated grant writer is the highest-starred Council commitment from the parks sprint map. Grant capacity is the key to most of the longer-term direction. Decide whether trail easements, based on a trail system plan noted above, are a sufficient condition of approval for adjacent development, whether they will be required to build the facilities themselves, or if one or the other option is appropriate depending on the circumstances.

Parks Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: If a new park, trail, or facility is proposed and approved without an evaluation of ongoing maintenance costs and funding mechanisms, the commitment does not advance until both are in place.

Check-In Questions: Annually:

What volunteer and partnership models have worked for comparable small cities? Are we learning from them?

What is our trail system actually delivering for Fortuna’s economy, and how is that evolving?

Priority 7: Pedestrian Safety & Connections

Safe to walk... that's the dream. — Community Interviewee

Pedestrian safety was one of the most urgent issues named by Spanish-speaking respondents in the focus group and between-workshops poll, as well as during the teen focus group.

Where We’re Headed

Fortuna is walkable, especially where economic activity and youth needs are concentrated. Safe pedestrian connections to schools, parks, Main Street, the Riverwalk, and the Mill Site are infrastructure that drives economic vitality — not optional amenities.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 7N1. Identify and prioritize planning, permitting, and funding top 3–5 pedestrian connections linking economic activity nodes, and complete construction ☐ 7N2. Advance 12th Street & Newburg intersection improvements — pursue construction funding ☐ 7N3. Develop plans for – and, where possible, move toward implementation of – extending the Riverwalk to connect with the regional trail system to the north and south and with downtown via pedestrian/bicycle access; the Great Redwood Trail; and connecting both to the Strongs Creek Trail ☐ 7N4. Require pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in all new development as a condition of approval ☐ 7N5. Identify funding partners and grants; prioritize connections near schools and for residents who depend on walking and/or bicycling in partnership with schools and other interested partners	☐ 7L1. Pedestrian/bike routes connection: Riverwalk → Mill Site → Strongs Creek ☐ 7L2. A plan for Riverwalk connecting to downtown is in place ☐ 7L3. Sidewalks across Fortuna ☐ 7L4. Secure permitting and funding for the Strongs Creek Trail ☐ 7L5. Grant-funded trail construction underway

Council Role

Grant-writing capacity is essential (a highly prioritized Council commitment needed by staff) to secure funding for building new infrastructure that the City has determined it can maintain. Make sure the projects we've identified actually get into the budget and get built — not just onto a list. Balance between beautification and accessibility in decisions.

Pedestrian Safety Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: Any new development approval must include a pedestrian and if possible bicycle connectivity condition/s – whether via construction or fees. If a staff report omits this, Community Development Director flags before Council vote.

Check-In Questions: Annually: Are the pedestrian investments we’re prioritizing actually changing how people move and spend in Fortuna? What does observation tell us about where the gaps remain?

Notes about questions, coordination needs, Compass consistency, and updates to the longer-term direction:

Priority 8: Youth, Recreation & Community Life

Kids form habits early around opportunities for things to do. — Staff member

Youth needs appeared at every collaboration station in community workshops but one, without being prompted — named by adults across all age groups and by teens themselves. Heavy star density focused on the lack of and need for desirable activities for teens. This topic was a clear outlier as a response to open questions about what could improve during interviews and, in the between-workshops poll, youth programming tied with economic development as the #1 five-to-ten year priority among Spanish-speaking respondents.

Where We’re Headed

Young Fortuna residents have reasons to make Fortuna their long-term home. The City’s Parks & Recreation programs are financially sustainable, meet community demand, and are fully staffed – they are an essential element of Fortuna’s high standards for “quality of life.” Fortuna’s sports and outdoor assets are a regional economic draw that contributes to City revenue and self-sustain residents’ local priorities. A diverse array of youth and other residents are active, productive civic participants rather than passive recipients of City services.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Longer-Term Direction (10 Years)
☐ 8N1. Maintain existing programs while developing sustainable funding strategies ☐ 8N2. Track, analyze, and apply learning from user numbers and program participation as a baseline for future experimentation and investment conversations ☐ 8N3. Send a letter to partner organizations about what was learned in this process about the community’s take on youth needs: name what is in high demand, affirm what the City can do, and voice support for partner-led complementary efforts (draft under separate cover) ☐ 8N4. Coordinate with FUHS/HCOE, nonprofit organizations, the County, and community donors on youth and other experiential programming ☐ 8N5. See Priorities 3 and 4 related to development of Foundation and donor partners, since the City’s reach in matters of youth is limited	☐ 8L1. Consider pursuit of all-weather sports fields at Newburg for regional tournaments and niche experiential outdoor facilities that drive regional and traveling overnight stays and sales tax revenue ☐ 8L2. Recreation programming and staffing is funded at levels that match community demand ☐ 8L3. Youth and community civic voice embedded in ongoing City planning and review processes ☐ 8L4. Consider supporting an expansion of high school career technical education per high community interest/demand

What Requires Partners

Local foundations, Fortuna School Districts, county organizations, and community donors are essential. The City can coordinate, advocate, and support — but cannot and should not try to do this alone.

Youth, Recreation & Community Life: Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: If recreation program participation drops by ____% (TBD) in a budget year, Council receives a full analysis of what was cut, what it cost, and the restoration path before the next budget cycle.

Check-In Questions: Are young people enjoying and seeing a future in Fortuna?
What are we hearing from teens and young adults, and how does that compare to what we assumed they needed?

Priority 9: Building A Communication Culture & Fortuna’s Voice

We need to be proactively communicating about what staff actually do. — April 21 staff workshop

Improving how the City communicates ranked in the top priorities at the ‘Our City Leadership & How We Participate’ community workshop station, receiving more starred contributions than any other topic at that station (22 stars).

Where We’re Headed

The engaged community is not a communications outcome, it is a governance resource. The City communicates proactively, in English and Spanish, about what it is doing, why, and what it costs. Every department builds communication priorities and messages into daily work, flags newsworthy items, coordinates outreach across the organization, and routes it through a communications lead. Spanish-speaking residents have equal access to information. Staff work is visible.

Near-Term Commitments (2 Years)	Long-Term Direction (10 Years)
❑ 9N1. Build City communications as a culture and system — not just a social media presence — including incorporation of communication priorities and messages into each department’s daily work ❑ 9N2. Develop an internal communications protocol: how departments flag items, coordinate messaging, and route outreach to the communications lead with clear purpose ❑ 9N3. Spanish translation and interpretation is provided ❑ 9N4. Clean up and maintain the City’s online presence to become a relied-upon source of accurate, current information ❑ 9N5. Develop a proactive social media presence: share staff stories, Council decisions, and why the City does what it does ❑ 9N6. Explore engaging communications interns from local high schools, College of the Redwoods, and Cal Poly Humboldt	❑ 9L1. Public understands what it costs to deliver City services — the invisible work is visible — and how and where to engage ❑ 9L2. City communications function sustains a proactive, cross-organizational, bilingual presence ❑ 9L3. Departments own their communication responsibility as a professional standard ❑ 9L4. Spanish-speaking residents are a fully integrated civic audience, not a supplemental one ❑ 9L5. Consider a communications lead role

Council Role

Actively share City communications with constituencies about City strategic priorities, where they came from as backup for making tough decisions, and how current activities are “getting us where we want to go.” Let staff know what you’re learning.

What Requires Partners

Building relationships with Fortuna Union High School, East High School, College of the Redwoods, and Cal Poly Humboldt for communications (and other types of) interns is worth pursuing in the near-term. Established Spanish-language interpretation partners for community engagement and translation review. Spanish-language media outlets and community-serving nonprofits for reaching households that don’t follow City channels. Community members who are trusted across different Fortuna neighborhoods and networks — people who can extend the City’s reach, share what they’re hearing, and bring others into civic participation. The City’s ability to build a genuinely engaged public depends on these relationships being actively cultivated, not assumed.

Communications Performance Tracking

Action Trigger: Major City announcements are not in both English and Spanish as standard practice and the City is not reaching traditionally unengaged populations.

Check-In Questions:

Annually: are we reaching residents who didn’t previously engage with the City? Are Spanish-speaking residents participating more in civic processes? What does our social media data actually tell us about who we’re reaching?
Long-term: Is public understanding of City decisions, tradeoffs, and priorities actually broadening and deepening — and is that producing more sustained, diverse civic participation beyond the same handful of voices? What does attendance, social media engagement, and public comment data tell us about whether the community feels welcomed, engaged, informed, and empowered enough to participate?

4. This Plan In Practice

A strategic plan that lives in a binder is not a strategy. It is a record of a conversation that never got put to work. This Plan is designed to enter the rhythm of City Hall — so that the decisions staff and Council make every week are grounded in shared principles and tested against what’s actually happening.

A. Using This Plan to Guide Daily Work

Department Work Plans

Departmental Staff Work Plans should name which Strategic Plan Priority each major initiative advances — so staff, Council, and the public can see how daily work connects to the City's direction — without having to read between the lines.

Personnel Evaluations

Personnel evaluations across all departments and staff should name strategic priorities so that staff can understand how the Strategic Plan intersects with their daily work.

Budget Cycle

When a budget proposal can't fund everything, the staff report names which Strategic Plan Priority is being advanced and which is being deferred, so Council is making an informed tradeoff decision, not an invisible one.

Council Proposals & Staff Reports

Every major staff report includes a brief Compass check: which decision filters are relevant to this decision, and what do they surface? This is not a box to check — it is the thinking staff does before the conversation, so the conversation can be substantive. All staff reports will include a section titled “Strategic Plan.” Each recommended action presented to the City Council must clearly identify and align with one or more goals or priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Hiring, Onboarding & Accountability

Job descriptions are updated to reflect Strategic Plan priorities and Core Values. New employees encounter the Compass and the Strategic Plan on day one — so they understand the City's direction and values before they learn about the organizational structure.

Quarterly Review & Learning Rhythm

Leadership meets quarterly to ask: *what are answers to our Check-In Questions telling us? Are Action Triggers being deployed and working? What is changing in our environment that this plan hasn't anticipated?* The goal is not compliance reporting, it is honest learning and course correction.

Council Orientation

New Council members receive this plan as a primary orientation document. The Compass is introduced as a regularly used tool to maintain the City's shared sense of vision and direction, built from common ground across nearly 40 community and staff conversations and focus groups that were confirmed and underscored with nuance during public, staff, and staff-Council workshops.

B. Feedback, Learning, & Adaptation

This plan is designed to stay alive — not through compliance, but through honest conversation on a regular basis. The following structure gives staff and Council a shared rhythm for evaluating what is working, what has changed, and what needs to shift.

Department Meetings: The Monthly Feedback Loop

Feedback begins at the community and department levels, not at the top. Each month, department directors bring two standing items to their leadership meetings:

- *What are important lessons we are learning from community interactions?*
- *How have we used Compass filter/s in decision/s or proposal/s this month, and what did that change?*
- *Is there anything emerging in daily operations — a pattern, a friction point, a community signal — that leadership (including other department/s) should know about before the quarterly pause?*

This is not a reporting requirement. It is a listening habit. The goal is to make sure the people closest to the community and implementation have a regular, low-barrier channel to flag what they are seeing. Issues that surface here get carried into the quarterly pause rather than waiting for an annual review to surface them.

The Quarterly Pause for Learning & Reflection

Four times a year, City leadership sets aside 90 minutes to ask three questions — not to report on progress, but to think together:

- *What are we learning that we didn't know when we wrote this plan?*
- *Where are our assumptions proving wrong, and what do we need to adjust?*
- *Is anything we committed to no longer the right thing to do — and do we have the courage to say so?*

The output is not a report. It is a shared answer to the question: are we still navigating well? If the answer reveals a course correction, the City Manager documents it and it becomes part of the annual plan review. This is how the plan stays relevant — not through compliance, but through honest conversation on a regular clock, recognizing that high-functioning organizations in today's state of high disruption need to learn and evolve.

The Annual Plan Review & Update

Once a year, leadership conducts a fuller review of the Strategic Plan against performance tracking Action Triggers and Check-In Questions. The annual review asks:

- *Which Action Triggers were crossed, did we respond as committed, and are larger adjustments needed?*
- *What are answers to the Check-In Questions telling us: are our strategies actually producing the outcomes we intended? Are we adapting them, if not? Are different or additional Check-In Questions needed?*
- *What has changed in the community, the economy, or the organization that this plan didn't anticipate?*
- *Does the Ideas Bank need to be updated – as ideas are ready to move into priority commitments and are there new ideas worth documenting and sharing?*

The annual review produces one simple output: a brief written record of what changed, what was learned, and what — if anything — is being adjusted in the plan. This record is shared with staff and Council and becomes the institutional memory that keeps the plan honest over time. It should spur discussion and adaptation as needed.

When the Plan Needs a Bigger Update

Minor adjustments — updated timelines, revised Action Triggers and Check-In Questions, new ideas in the Bank — happen through the annual review without formal adoption. A more substantial revision of the plan is warranted when:

- A significant change in the City's fiscal situation alters what is feasible
- A major community or economic shift — or establishing clear direction among potential options currently being explored — changes the context for one or more priorities
- Staff or Council determine through Check-In Questions that a core strategy is not working and needs to be rethought — not just refined

Substantial revisions go back to Council for adoption. The standard for triggering a revision is not discomfort with a priority — it is evidence that the direction needs to change.

Keeping the Community in the Conversation

The community’s voice does not end at plan adoption. Each annual review should include at least one structured opportunity for community participation — whether a brief public comment period on the review findings, a targeted check-in with underrepresented groups, or a broader update session. Underrepresented and seldom-seen community members, like the Spanish-speaking community and youth, warrant actual outreach beyond general public notice – often “going to them” in places where they are more likely to engage. What the community is experiencing should inform what staff and Council are learning and applying to adjustments in strategy.

The City’s Learning Rhythm at A Glance

Cadence	Who	Purpose
Monthly Meetings	Department Director Meetings	Flag emerging and collaborative issues, note where Compass filters were applied, surface items for quarterly pause
Quarterly Pause & Reflect	Department Directors Meeting: 90 minutes	Quarterly Pause: three shared questions, course corrections documented by City Manager
Annual Plan Update	Directors + Council briefing	Full plan review: Action Triggers, Check-In Questions, Ideas Bank update, community re-entry, written record of changes
As Needed	City Manager + relevant leads	Plan revision: fiscal shift, major community/economic change, or evidence a core strategy isn't working

An Indicator of Progress: City Performance Tracking

At the start of this process, staff and community members were asked to rate City performance from 0–10 on a set of issues that have since become this plan’s priorities. These ratings and the words used to explain them are documented below as a starting baseline (see table, next page). They are not scientific measures, they are honest snapshots of how people felt in fall 2025 that are useful for anchoring future conversations about whether things are getting better.

How this baseline was collected. Staff were asked to rate the City on three dimensions: ability to work with others and get things done, clarity of vision and direction, and housing and economic development guidance. Community members were asked to rate the City against their own expectations, and on their interactions with City staff. These were not identical questions, and the community question in particular produced mostly qualitative responses rather than numeric scores. The averages below reflect careful interpretation of those responses and four corrected attribution errors made during Listening Campaign Report development.

How to use this going forward. The City’s Strategic Plan review cycle creates natural moments to return to these questions. At the Year 1 review, the same questions should be asked again of staff, and of a comparable community sample to establish a first year-over-year comparison. At Year 2, as implementation gets underway, the City should add performance questions tied directly to each Strategic Plan Priority, so the tracking system grows alongside the work. By that point, the original broad questions will have given City leadership a clear baseline and one year of trend data to bring into that conversation.

The community question most in need of redesign is the expectations question: because each interviewee rated whatever they personally cared about, the baseline reflects different things for different people. For Year 2 and beyond, structured questions tied to specific priorities will produce results that are consistent, comparable, and directly actionable. The staff questions, with minor refinement, are ready to repeat as-is. One useful adjustment: separating the rating of staff effectiveness from the effect of Council on outcomes — currently combined in the Ability question — would produce clearer and more useful data for both leadership groups. The City’s growing regional partnership work, including with the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, is worth acknowledging in the performance framework as implementation progresses.

Citywide Performance Tracking

Issue	Fall '25 Ranking	Where We Were	Where We Want to Be	Year 1† Checkup	Year 2 Checkup
Clear Vision & Direction	4.7* <i>staff avg.</i>	<i>Either I'm uninformed on what the vision is, or it doesn't exist. — Staff interviewee</i>	<i>Having that framework from the beginning sets the foundation for the next people that come after us — it's not us making the decision, it's the Fortuna community telling us what [they want]. — Council member during Staff-Council Joint Session, April 2026</i>	Score:	Score:
Ability to Get Things Done	6.6 <i>staff avg.</i>	<i>It's hard to be effective when everybody's kind of catching up all the time. — Staff interviewee</i>	<i>Hopefully this tool helps us... get to finish what we started. — Staff during Staff-Council Joint Session, April 2026</i>	Score:	Score:
Economic Direction & Growth	3.5** <i>staff avg.</i>	<i>The Mill Site has been a topic of conversation the whole time I've worked here — 16 years — and nothing has happened. — Staff interviewee</i>	<i>If we knew what the focus was, it would help. — Community interviewee</i>	Score:	Score:
Community Sense of City Direction	4.1 <i>community avg.</i>	<i>I don't know whatsoever what we are doing in City government... I am kind of just drifting in the dark while waiting for someone to tell me. — High school interviewee</i>	<i>If you know what the City's direction is, people who develop programs like me can do what the community needs. Because if we don't know, and we aren't asked... — Community interviewee</i>	Score:	Score:
City Staff Interactions	9.1†† <i>community avg.</i>	Community members with direct access to City staff rated those interactions positively. Those without access were largely unaware how to assess the City.	Staff interactions were largely positive across community feedback — the goal is for feedback to be consistent across City interactions and making City access more visible and equitable.	Score:	Score:

** Vision average adjusted to 4.7 (n=17): two respondents who explicitly scored the current planning process at a 10 rather than institutional track record are excluded from the baseline. The unadjusted average, 5.3 (n=19), is the more accurate starting point for year-over-year comparison.*

*** Housing & Economic Development average is 3.5 (n=11 of 19): eight staff members declined to score this dimension, most citing state and federal constraints as the primary limiting factor rather than City decisions. This question is a strong candidate for replacement with Priority-specific questions at the Year 2 review.*

† At the Year 1 review, ask staff the same three questions. Ask a comparable community sample about their sense of City direction and their interactions with staff — as two distinct questions. Note any major changes in context before comparing.

†† In the listening Campaign Report, this number was reported as 8.2 and has been revised to reflect a more clear delineation of answers that leave out references to only one department or to the Council.

In closing, the goal is both a mindset and a discipline: the City of Fortuna learns faster than its challenges accumulate and avoids the costly and frustrating cycle of outdated plans that leave an organization without guidance. This is as much an organizational culture goal as a strategic one.

No plan survives contact with reality unchanged, but this system is meant to build in honest reflection so the City can adjust before losing momentum, opportunity, and relevance.

5. Ideas Bank

The following are promising ideas that emerged from the community and staff engagement process — things that are not yet first-priority City commitments but deserve a documented home, so they don't get lost. They are organized into three sections: ideas within the City's direct reach, ideas that belong to community organizations, collaborative groups, and civic champions, and opportunities ripe for entrepreneurial business development. The City's role varies by section: direct actor, coordinator and advocate, or simply a City that has listened carefully and wants to make what it heard available to people who can act on it. There are many additional ideas included in the *City of Fortuna Listening Campaign Report* and *Future Fortuna Workshops Report*.

These possibilities arose from community and staff engagement and are not commitments. They should be updated every couple of years during the plan review cycle and shared with community and economic development partners.

A. Ideas the City Can Lead or Directly Support

Youth Activities, Recreation & Gathering

- ☐ Enhancing youth recreation activities and programs – this has the added benefit of providing more opportunities for youth employment
- ☐ River access for paddle-boarding, kayaking, and fishing
- ☐ A disc golf course and/or other amenity enhancements at a City park
- ☐ A running track around Newburg Park — named in the teen focus group alongside requests for more trails
- ☐ Youth civic engagement program: structured partnerships with local schools for teens to engage with and advise on City decisions that affect them, including engaging visits from Council members and City staff about issues-of-interest and opportunities to influence City decision-making
- ☐ Community garden space/s, especially connected to schools or parks (perhaps managed by partners)

Economic Development & Housing

- ☐ Workshop participants were particularly interested in pursuing development of novel outdoor experiences. Interviewees and workshop participants alike emphasized an interest in enhancing Fortuna's outdoor activity appeal as a regional and tourist-attracting destination, akin to the Skywalk in Eureka and Humboldt Bay Trail. For example: all-weather sports field/complex, "trail town," mountain-biking, ziplining.
- ☐ Housing accessibility was noted in especially the focus groups with traditionally unheard or marginalized groups to be a primary concern – even teens were repeatedly emphatic about it without prompting. While this is a challenge across the state and the county, identifying Fortuna's particular approach to meeting these needs will have support.
- ☐ Housing assistance communication strategy: connect residents to existing county and state programs that most people don't know exist.
- ☐ Employer-assisted housing: a) develop a communication strategy so prospective City staff understand housing assistance options in the region; and b) consider incentives for commercial/industrial developments to incorporate housing into their projects.

We need to sell experiences — remind people how they felt in our small town close to nature.

— Community Workshops participant

Community Engagement & Civic Participation

Improving how the City communicates and how residents participate was the highest-energy topic at the "Our City Leadership and How We Participate" station, receiving more starred contributions than any other topic at that station. This is a challenge for every government: how people engage has changed substantively since standard civic engagement protocols were developed. Public expectations for transparency, access, and participation are evolving

faster than most municipal systems have, and staffing capacity makes it harder still. The ideas below span a spectrum from zero-cost culture shifts to investments worth planning for.

- ❑ A single, consistent communication channel — one email list, one social media presence, one website — so residents know where to find things and the City's capacity is not split across platforms.
- ❑ Explore a communications intern pipeline through local high schools, College of the Redwoods, and/or Cal Poly Humboldt — particularly for bilingual and social media engagement — a low-cost way to build capacity while creating a civic pathway for young people.
- ❑ Develop a brief presentation and/or visuals about what the City learned in the Future Fortuna process and how that influenced a major update in City direction and leadership approach to spread the understanding that the City listened and is putting residents/businesses interests to work. Share in familiar places like civic clubs and in unfamiliar places for this type of engagement (e.g. schools, nonprofit board meetings, Farmers' Market tabling).
- ❑ Cultivate an "invisible work" communication habit: short social media posts/reels showing what City staff actually do — the maintenance crew fixing a water main at 2am, the permit desk processing a small business application. Costs almost nothing; builds public goodwill the City will need when it asks for something hard.
- ❑ Workshop participant: "1 sheet of paper in the envelope with the water bill listing the events coming up that month" and opportunities to engage. While the reality is that fewer and fewer people receive their water bills by mail, it may be a population that engages less online.
- ❑ Proactive bilingual social media presence: use automated tools to transform minutes and transcripts into engaging points about Council and Commission decisions, staff stories, and why the City does what it does — in English and Spanish as a standard — including in occasional separate posts to trigger Spanish-language algorithms. Consider asking regularly: what do you want to hear more about?
- ❑ Low-barrier, recurring engagement that doesn't require coming to City Hall: school visits, community events, the Farmers' Market. "I would love to see our local City leaders engaging more with students — come talk to us!" — High school staff and teens, focus group
- ❑ Youth civic engagement: structured partnerships with local schools for teens to engage with and advise on City decisions that affect them, including visits from Council members and City staff about issues of interest and opportunities to influence City decision-making. A teen participant noted that "the main reason I would come to a workshop like [Future Fortuna] is if I knew I would really have a voice and it would matter."
- ❑ Outreach to encourage a broader, more diverse pool of Council and Commission/Committee candidates — including people with young children, working families, and non-English speakers. "There shouldn't just be retired people on Council — then our voice becomes very limited." — Council interviewee

I think we've spoiled our community — they don't really see the full picture of what a typical employee really does. — Staff interviewee

If people saw that their input actually mattered, they would be more likely to speak up.

— Community interviewee

Healthcare Access

Healthcare access came up in listening campaign interviews as both a quality-of-life concern and an economic development opportunity for the region. The City's land use authority is the primary lever — zoning that supports healthcare services as a priority use, GPU policies, and incentives that make it easier for healthcare providers to locate in Fortuna:

- ❑ Work with GPU consulting team to consider healthcare services as a potential economic focus area in the Economic Development Element in terms of regional demand and return on investment for providers to locate in Fortuna, and revenue generation for the City
- ❑ Explore what land use designations, zoning and/or incentives would attract or support expanded healthcare presence

B. Ideas That Need A Champion, Collaborative, or Nonprofit Partner

The City does not have the capacity (especially for the near future), jurisdiction, and/or responsibility to operate or host many ideas that arose with fervor, including the ideas below. It *can* advocate, support through land use and coordination, and make visible what the community has asked for. A draft letter to youth-serving partner organizations – inviting them to review what the City learned and to help the City put the results to work – is under separate cover.

Youth, Activities, Recreation, Enrichment & Gathering

- ☐ Expanded after-school and summer programs, particularly for teens
- ☐ Youth-focused skills and entrepreneurship programming, such as local internships and business mentorships (from coffee shops to niche trades), a maker space, to expanded career technical education/trades training

Engaging indoor and outdoor youth/family/community activities and gathering spaces outside the scope of Parks & Rec were named often across teen focus groups, community interviews, and workshop stations as “anywhere that isn’t a parking lot”:

- ☐ A music venue for live events — this came up across the listening campaign and community workshop stations
- ☐ A skate and bike park — named repeatedly in the teen focus group and referenced a prior Tony Hawk donation effort that didn’t fully materialize, which gives it historical resonance
- ☐ Restoring the Fortuna Theater as a theater-pub for a mix of local productions, music events, and movie nights (a cross between the Eureka and Arcata Theaters). In an era of online streaming, the depth and consistency of love for theaters was striking.
- ☐ Spanish classes for all ages

Economic Development & Downtown

- ☐ During the second workshop, “partner with schools and college to develop trades education facilities” received the highest number of stars in the spending preference exercise.
- ☐ A dedicated arts and makers market, enhanced Farmers' Market, and other events that activate Main Street for as much economic as social purposes came up in interviews, focus groups, and were very popular topics at the workshops — with existing events as proof of concept for what’s possible, including expansion of the downtown Farmers' Market by relocating to another downtown area out of the wind and adding a weekend day with a more festival-like atmosphere of offerings beyond just produce and plants.
- ☐ Business incubator or shared workspace for local entrepreneurs and remote workers.
- ☐ Healthcare and behavioral health services as an economic development focus area — demand is high, regional draw potential is real to offer alternatives to driving to Santa Rosa, S.F., Redding, and Medford. (See also: Healthcare Access under Section 5A, above, for GPU and zoning implications.)
- ☐ Investing in Fortuna as a “Trail Town” to attract regional and 101 visitors to stay, spend, and play — and providing locals with more activity options — requires dedicated, long-term partnership efforts to dedicate easements and expand and connect downtown/visitor-serving amenities with the Riverwalk, Great Redwood Trail, and Strongs Creek Trail.
- ☐ Experiential outdoor offerings were very popular topics: pursuing development of regional attraction(s) — akin to Sequoia Park’s Skywalk — for Fortuna locals and visitors alike.
- ☐ Agritourism: connecting visitors to the Eel Valley’s niche agricultural producers, landscape, and activities.

A Main Street that is both recognizably Fortuna and genuinely alive. — Community Workshops, Station 6
Fortuna needs color — periodic events that allow having an audience that spends money in local businesses. — Workshop participant (in Spanish)

Homelessness

The lack of locally accessible services and support for houseless people was raised in listening campaign interviews, focus groups, and workshops as a widespread community concern. As a complex regional challenge, all jurisdictions are struggling with this issue. The City's capacity and authority here is very limited, as this issue is generally addressed through county/state programs and nonprofit services. While this is not a Fortuna-specific problem to solve alone, it is one the City and local organizations can participate in addressing through regional solutions. To be successful, these efforts literally “take a village,” and partners should bring proposals that the City can utilize available levers — land use, public safety, and information about services coordination — to bring to the table.

C. Needs Ripe for Business Development

The following opportunities are documented gaps in Fortuna’s local economy — not City projects, but an open invitation to partners, entrepreneurs, and investors who want to build something that serves this community and generates the sales tax revenue that will fund a healthy local government and everything Fortuna values.

Any business plan in this market should be grounded in Fortuna’s actual population size, retail realities, and unmet needs that would draw patrons from the greater region. In the current online retail environment, the region is not large enough to sustain some general retail concepts — even in the population center, Eureka’s independent shops are under sustained pressure from online competition. The strongest opportunities are in providing experiences, local services, food and beverage, and niche offerings that can’t be replicated online or replaced by a delivery truck and that attract patrons from Southern Humboldt, the Humboldt Bay Area, and U.S. 101 travelers.

Community Need	What the Engagement Process Told Us
Evening dining and gathering	Residents consistently named the need for more places to eat, drink, and gather — especially options that don't require driving to Eureka.
Theater and live performance venue	Love for theaters across the listening campaign was striking. Two model ideas emerged: restoring the Fortuna Theater as a theater-pub for local productions, music events, and movie nights (a cross between the Arcata and Eureka Theaters); and development of a contemporary movie theater. Both require a private operator or community development organization, not the City.
Arcade or family fun center	Named repeatedly in teen focus group, including ideas like bowling, mini-golf, go-carts, trampoline, and arcade. Identifies a real gap in supervised, engaging options for youth 12–18 that Parks & Rec doesn't fill – and could attract families from across the region.
Music venue for live events	Named in teen focus groups and across workshop stations; a natural complement to the theater-pub model or a standalone opportunity for a smaller operator. An outdoor venue for music also came up a fair amount, given Fortuna's warmer climate than the Humboldt Bay Area.
Skate and bike park	Named repeatedly in the teen focus group; a prior Tony Hawk donation effort shows the community appetite exists and has history. Could be privately developed, foundation-funded, or a hybrid. This is not a City operational commitment.
Outdoor activities and adventure services	Consistent interest in services that make it easier for residents and visitors to access Fortuna's outdoor assets — river, trails, redwoods. Strongest opportunity tied to “trail town” positioning and river access development.

Markets & street fairs	Significant interest across all types of engagement and groups in a Farmers' Market that is in a less windy location and provides more of interest to families as an outing. Street fairs, perhaps inspired by Eureka's Friday Night Market, also came up as an interest, particularly from teens, as social events that appeal to a wide variety of people.
Agritourism experiences	Connecting visitors to the Eel Valley's niche agricultural producers, landscape, and activities — named by business owners and community members; requires entrepreneurial operators and marketing capacity, not City infrastructure.
Experiential regional attraction	Pursuing development of a regional draw akin to Sequoia Park's Skywalk — an attraction that puts Fortuna on the map for day-trippers and 101 travelers. Requires a developer, operator, and likely a public-private partnership.
Healthy & local food options	Named across age groups and backgrounds; Farmers' Market was a consistently appreciated touchstone, especially with a downtown home that is less windy and a more vibrant weekend format.
Skills training and maker space	Youth and young adults named interest in local opportunities to develop trades, creative, and entrepreneurial skills — could be an independent operator, a CR partnership, or an employer-led program.
Childcare	Consistently named as a barrier to workforce participation, especially for young families and Spanish-speaking households.
Niche retail and apparel	Named by teens and young adults as a consistent gap — currently requiring a drive to Eureka. Note that it is likely the strongest local retail concepts in markets this size tend to be experience-oriented, tightly curated, or tied to a specific community identity (outdoor gear, local makers, heritage goods) rather than general merchandise.
Trail-connected lodging and hospitality	Visitors often pass through without staying. Lodging, food, and hospitality services close to the river — with river-viewing decks, bike storage, and local character — and future trail developments represent a documented gap with real economic upside.

This page intentionally left blank as a back page for notes about questions, coordination needs, Compass consistency, and updates to longer-term Plan elements or direction.

Appendix: Informing the Strategic Plan – Future Fortuna Listening Campaign & Workshops Results Summary

This information is provided for transparency and illustration of how Strategic Priorities in the Future Fortuna planning process arose over several seasons of listening and then exploring and refining the results. Analysis is based on the frequency of topics that emerged as themes across instruments of listening and engagement (interviews, focus groups, workshops, and polling). Topical themes were coded for presence when any related underlying concern is clearly mentioned or addressed, even when planning terminology is absent — for example, teen requests for arcades, restaurants, street markets, and internships are coded as economic development signals (Priority #4); the same comments are also coded as youth-supporting amenities (Priority #8). As this indicates, participation themes may be related to more than one Priority, e.g. youth sports facilities and amenities were named both as a youth/family need and as a potential strategy for regional economic draw. Interview and focus group results reflect coding of detailed, synthesized reports on each; results from workshops are based on photographs of work products with content arising from the listening campaign and/or developed by participants (see example images, below table, and note that generational results are not included here). Results of the final staff-Council session in April are not depicted here as a presentation and discussion of priorities crafted in the staff workshop were turned into the Strategic Plan and GPU Recommendations. **For detailed results see the City of Fortuna Listening Campaign Report and the Future Fortuna Workshops Report.**

Strategic Plan Priority & Top Related Participation Themes	Com-munity Inter-views* (n=19)	Staff Inter-views* (n=19)	Council Inter-views* (n=5)	Immigrant Focus Group * Nov. 2025 (n=12)	Teen Focus Group* Dec. 2025 (n=8)	Staff Workshop 1, Nov. 2025 <i>Turned initial listening campaign results into exploratory strategic priorities</i>	Community Workshops 1-2, March & April 2026 ** (n=~150 participants) <i>Workshop products were cumulative. Participants contributed ideas via post-its and emphasis with stars for preferences about ideas shared. See photos, below.</i>	W1 Feedback Card & W1-W2 Mentimeter Polls, March-April 2026 *** (n=40: W1 feedback cards re: draft compass) n=186 162 respondents during and the week following W1 re: guiding principles; 24 respondents re: City priorities between workshops. See photos, below.	Staff Workshop 2, April 2026 <i>Priority commitments developed and Council asks named****</i>
1. Clarity, Culture & Capacity for Organizational Health <i>Establish direction that outlasts any one leader; protect institutional knowledge through succession transitions; build cross-department collaboration as standard practice; use Compass as working tool, not a wall display</i>	12/19 (63%)	19/19 (100%)	3/5	Present — participants described not knowing what the City's priorities are or how decisions get made; the tokenism quote reflects a vision/ accountability gap	Weak/indirect — teens engaged when the facilitator introduced the concept of a plan, but did not raise the City's lack of direction independently	Dominant theme — staff named "north star," spinning compass, and "once City Managers leave, the vision leaves" as their top organizational concern	“Having help with long-range planning... wow, that's huge" ★10 — highest starred item on Points of Gain at Station 1. Points of Pain: Vision & Direction drew multi-generational response: "Either I'm uninformed on what the vision is, or it doesn't exist" ★3. Opportunity: "ensure the new Strategic Plan is rooted in community and staff priorities — not any one leader's preferences" ★12; develop clear decision-making filters ★11; review legacy commitments ★8	Strong – 88% of 157 respondents during and immediately after Workshop 1 said Fortuna needs a vision; 66% didn't know if one had ever existed. "Leadership with clear direction" ranked #1 in the 2040 vision (Workshop 1 English poll). Between-workshops priority poll: "Fortuna needs a plan" ranked #2 most urgent issue and was the single most-selected top issue (7 of 21 respondents named it first). Clear Direction ranked #1 Fortuna value for Boomers; consistent top-3 across all generations and both language polls.	Staff confirmed Compass elements and decision filter use since November. Internal priorities matrix: Purpose Statement, job descriptions/onboarding, and meeting redesign named as pre-commitments.
2. Our People — Staff Retention, Pay & Succession <i>Competitive pay is critical; avoid City as stepping-stone-to-elsewhere dynamic; 4-day work week helps morale; plan for succession and maintain institutional knowledge</i>	9/19 (47%)	19/19 (100%)	3/5	Absent — not a focus of the Spanish-speaking immigrant community's experience	Indirect — teens' aspirational framing of leaving Fortuna for lack of jobs/futures is the community-facing consequence of this priority	Strong — staff named pay compression, turnover risk, and "stepping stone" dynamic consistently; 34-hour week named as morale tool	Consistent with this being an internal City Hall concern, not a top public priority. Staff recruitment and retention received ★10 in spending priorities, present as a mid-tier preference. Staff capacity constraints named explicitly at Station 1: "everyone playing multiple roles, impacting their ability to provide communications beyond the basics."	Indirect — not a named issue in either poll, consistent with this being an internal City Hall priority not visible to the general public. Indirectly present in the values ranking: "Committed Service — recognition that staff work hard" ranked in all generational responses, signaling community awareness of and appreciation for staff.	Internal priorities matrix: competitive pay as non-negotiable; 4-day work week as explicit retention tool; full cost of turnover calculation identified as near-term commitment. Council role: treat compensation as a priority, not a wish.
3. Fiscal Foundation — Revenue, Cost Accounting & Honest Commitments <i>Know the true cost of everything before committing; evaluate legacy commitments honestly; sales tax measure as bridge to economic vitality; fees should reflect real cost of services; stop accumulating unfunded maintenance obligations</i>	16/19 (84%)	18/19 (95%)	5/5	Present — job opportunities and economic security named as top-3 priorities; affordable housing a recurring concern connected to economic stability	Indirect — teens' requests (arcade, theater, restaurants, skate park) reflect awareness that Fortuna lacks amenities; not discussed in fiscal terms	Strong — revenue generation acknowledged as the utmost priority above all others; River Lodge and legacy commitments discussed explicitly	At Station 3, Economic Future of Our City, revenue & retail capture “pain” garnered ★51 (the highest single starred cluster across <i>all six</i> station banners) and “opportunities” garnered ★24. Spending priority exercise at Station 1 was the primary signal: participants distributed stars across categories with economic development ★18, police ★20, parks ★18, and pool support ★17 all in the top tier — reflecting implicit prioritization of City revenue spending. "How are we going to grow and support City services sustainably?" named in What's Missing. Pre-permitting Mill Site named as a spending priority ★★.	Present – Economic Resilience ("the status quo is not sustainable") ranked #2 core value in Workshop 1 overall, behind only Quality of Life; named in top 3 by every generation. Between-workshops poll: "Fortuna needs a plan — generating City revenue to meet our needs" ranked #2 most urgent issue, with revenue generation explicitly embedded in the framing. "Balancing character with growth" ranked #4 most urgent issue (between-workshops poll, n=23 English), reflecting the trade-off tension this priority navigates.	Strategy Maps for Revenue Generation, Tax Measure & Long-Term Cost Accounting both developed sprint maps. Top issues: educate community on General Fund vs. Enterprise Fund ★3; asset inventory and time-tracking. Council asks: create volunteer Tax Measure committee, canvass, support messaging, do not edit tested ballot language ★9; investment in infrastructure★4.
4. Economic Development to Build Fortuna's Future <i>Dedicated City economic development function needed; Mill Site development prerequisites; Main Street and downtown vitality; business attraction and brand identity; freeway capture and lodging; living wage jobs and career pathways; workforce and affordable housing as economic development foundation</i>	19/19 (100%)	19/19 (100%)	5/5	Strong — job opportunities and economic security named as top-3 priorities; immigrant participants expressed desire for businesses, entrepreneurship resources, and jobs that allow families to stay	Strong — teens as underserved age group for local activities; youth entrepreneurship resources; sports programs and safe gathering spaces; affordable housing named as essential to family stability and youth ability to stay in Fortuna	Dominant — dedicated Econ Dev't function named as #1 City need; Mill Site prerequisites and revenue growth roadmap were top priorities. Economic development sprint map future ideal: roundabouts built out + Mill Site ★★; vibrant retail/sales/tax base ★★.	In top spending tier at Station 1, economic development ★18 and business recruitment/retention ★17; with tourism/marketing ★21. Partner with local education for internships and youth entrepreneurship ★23 was the highest starred item in the station's opportunity set. Mill Site infrastructure readiness ★8; pre-permitting Mill Site ★★. At Station 3 (Economic Future of Our City) drew heavy star density for key topics: revenue/retail capture, Main Street vitality, Mill Site vision, and living wage jobs. "Get people to stop, spend, stay" and "become a hub — draw businesses Eureka is pushing away" named across community, business, and Council voices.	Dominant – Economic Development & Businesses selected by 57% as a top-two 5–10 year focus in Workshop 1 (highest of all options by a wide margin); Spanish poll: Economic Development tied #1 at 67%. Between-workshops poll: "Main Street going quiet — early closures, empty storefronts, dollars leaving to Eureka" ranked #1 most urgent issue by average score; "The Mill Site — Fortuna's biggest land opportunity, still waiting" ranked #5. Economic Resilience ranked #2 core value across all generations. Convergence across both polls, both languages, and all generations.	Near-term priorities: establish City Econ Dev't function, develop Fortuna's economic identity and brand, streamline process for right-fit businesses, prioritize Mill Site infrastructure prerequisites. Council role: free up staff time from boards ★3; create a community Econ Dev't working group; give staff time to pursue grants.

Strategic Plan Priority & Top Related Participation Themes	Com- munity Inter- views* (n=19)	Staff Inter- views* (n=19)	Council Inter- views* (n=5)	Immigrant Focus Group * Nov. 2025 (n=12)	Teen Focus Group* Dec. 2025 (n=8)	Staff Workshop 1, Nov. 2025 <i>Turned initial listening campaign results into exploratory strategic priorities</i>	Community Workshops 1-2, March & April 2026 ** (n=~150 participants) <i>Workshop products were cumulative. Participants contributed ideas via post-its and emphasis with stars for preferences about ideas shared. See photos, below.</i>	W1 Feedback Card & W1-W2 Mentimeter Polls, March-April 2026 *** (n=40: W1 feedback cards re: draft compass) n=186 162 respondents during and the week following W1 re: guiding principles; 24 respondents re: City priorities between workshops. See photos, below.	Staff Workshop 2, April 2026 <i>Priority commitments developed and Council asks named****</i>
5. A Development-Ready City — Permitting, Design & Standards <i>Make building in Fortuna predictable, fair, and fast for the right projects; clear design standards protect character without blocking good development; streamlined permitting enables economic dev’t the community wants</i>	3/19 (16%)	9/19 (47%)	2/5	Absent — not a focus of immigrant community's experience	Absent — not raised	Present — staff named burdensome permitting as a barrier to economic development; "did our process create something so burdensome people say 'yeah, no, I'm good'?"	Building permit streamlining received ★4 in Workshop 1 spending priorities — low but present. Pre-permitting Mill Site development ★★. Consistent with interview pattern: public names community and economic development outcomes they want; permitting process is not independently surfaced as a priority concern.	Indirect — not named as a standalone issue in either poll; embedded in economic development and Mill Site framing. "Infrastructure" tied at 27% in Workshop 1 spending priorities, overlapping with the infrastructure prerequisites that make development-readiness possible. The public names the outcomes (businesses, jobs, Mill Site activity); permitting is the mechanism staff and Council understand as the path there.	Strategy maps for Streamlining Development Process, Design Standards & Housing. Permit timelines and permitting audit named as urgent ★5. Simplify fee schedule ★4. Design standards adoption ★4 as a GPU planning priority; train the Planning Commission ★ and provide them with Compass ★. Council role: trust staff to make ministerial decisions ★.
6. Parks, Trails & Outdoors — Fortuna's Natural Advantage <i>Beloved key of Fortuna’s identity; only expand what we can maintain; Riverwalk restoration as visible proof of City commitment; pursue a trail system (Great Redwood, Strong's Creek, Riverwalk) and Eel River access as economic/recreation asset; regional sports destination potential; volunteer corps to reduce costs and build community ownership</i>	18/19 (95%)	12/19 (63%)	3/5	Present — Riverwalk named as a source of community pride and also visible neglect; desire for safe outdoor spaces for families	Strong — river access (fishing, kayaking, paddleboarding), more trails, cleaner parks, and skate/bike park named repeatedly; outdoor spaces a top gap	Present — maintenance burden of grant-funded acquisitions; parks & rec staffing constraints; volunteer infrastructure noted as asset	Parks & Rec programs rated highly across all generations. Natural beauty (river, redwoods, trails) named as widely source of community pride. Riverwalk is both beloved and visibly neglected — "prime real estate you can make something of" — with a clear multi-generational shared vision: trail system, riverfront park, connected to the Great Redwood Trail. Maintenance burden of grant-funded acquisitions named as a structural concern. What's Missing: sidewalks and trails the highest-starred cluster; community pool called for across multiple generations; river access named independently by multiple contributors. Becoming "Trail Town" and GRT connection to Mill Site named economic opportunity. Spending priorities at Station 1: parks ★18, parks maintenance ★15, trails ★13, river access ★13, GRT development ★11, pool support ★17.	Present — Quality of Life ranked #1 Fortuna value across every instrument, every generation, and both language polls — 20 of 26 paper card respondents ranked it first (avg 5.43 of 6); #1 on W1 Mentimeter (n=162 combined); top-3 across every generation. Parks, trails, river, and natural beauty are explicitly embedded in its definition as stated in the Compass. W1 City Focus question: Tourism and City marketing selected by respondents as a top-two focus, consistent with outdoor recreation and trail-town positioning (n=100 English respondents to that question).	Strategy map for Parks + Trails + Outdoors: maintenance plan required for all projects ★3; [pursuing] grants identified as urgent but limited by staff capacity. Ideal: connected trail system town to river ★★; all-weather sports fields at Newburg ★★. Council role: dedicated grant writer ★5.
7. Pedestrian Safety & Connections <i>Safety to walk around town, day and night, is a widely shared aspiration; 12th St/Newburg intersection a safety priority across community; pedestrian connections that link economic activity nodes; safe routes to school</i>	7/19 (37%)	4/19 (21%)	1/5	Strong — traffic light at 12th & Newburg named as an immediate safety priority; pedestrian infrastructure for children and families a top concern; police on bikes requested	Present — feel unsafe as pedestrians, especially near school; 12th Street named as unsafe (convergence with immigrant focus group)	Present — pedestrian connectivity named as an infrastructure priority; school-route gaps identified	Pedestrian safety surfaces as a secondary signal at Station 2, concentrated in "Places to Go": teens describe it as unsafe to get to many places as a pedestrian, especially at night ★★; safe pedestrian infrastructure near schools and on Main Street named in Opportunities ★6. Station 4 (Outdoors & Public Spaces) What's Missing banner: sidewalks drew the highest starred cluster, with multiple independent contributions across generations; bike trails and multi-use path from River Lodge to Main Street also starred. "Fix Newburg & 12th St — possible roundabout?" named in Station 1 What's Missing. Spending priorities: sidewalks ★9, improved ped/bike facilities ★9, street lighting ★6. Cross-station presence without single-participant inflation concerns.	Present — Between-workshops poll (n=24 combined; 23 English + 1 Spanish): "Getting around safely — walkability, lighting, and dangerous crossings" ranked #1 most urgent issue by the Spanish-language respondent and #7 (last) by average score among English respondents. This cross-language divergence — last for English speakers, first for the Spanish-language respondent — directly mirrors the pattern in interviews and focus groups and is one of the strongest signals in the dataset that this priority is felt most acutely by communities least represented in traditional civic participation.	Strategy map for Ped Safety/Access: identify funding partners ★ + most important connections; transport for disadvantaged populations as priority. Ideal: Riverwalk → Mill Site → Strong's Creek connection ★★; sidewalks across all of Fortuna ★; connecting Riverwalk to downtown ★★. GPU priorities: require sidewalks in all developments; require trail easements ★. Council role: grant-writing capacity ★4; CIP access to funding.
8. Youth, Recreation & Community Life <i>Close the activity programming gap for teens; give young people reasons to stay and come back; expand “third places” beyond school and home; career pathways that don't require leaving; community events as economic and social anchors; lean into family-friendly developments e.g. becoming a sports destination</i>	18/19 (95%)	12/19 (63%)	4/5	Present — teen activities as underserved age group; entrepreneurship resources for youth; sports programs; safe gathering spaces	Dominant — the focus group centered on topic; nothing to do after school, bored, unsafe as peds, need for arcades/ theater/skate park/restaurants; feel cared about but not always seen	Present — youth programming, career pathways, and community events all named; sports destination potential for regional revenue	The "Growing Up & Feeling At Home" station had participation energy across both workshops, particularly from younger generations: Gen Z & Alpha post-its and stars were concentrated here more than any other station. Highest single star cluster at this station: "theater closed, no arcade, no music venue, it feels flat and boring" ★12. Top starred opportunities: gathering spaces teens can call their own ★12; sports destination as youth retention AND revenue strategy ★7. Spanish additions: free/low-cost arts classes, day and night recreation for all ages, cultural events representing all communities. "Genuine engagement — not tokenism" ★4. Trades education partnership with schools/college was the single highest spending priority across all categories at Station 1 ★23, and visual preference for images of youth sports/activities/training ★58. Youth needs appeared at the other 5 collaboration stations without prompting. Youth in action images were among the highest-starred visual preferences.	Strong — "Young people leaving — not enough to do as teens or families; not enough jobs or housing" ranked #6 most urgent issue in between-workshops poll (n=23 English); ranked #2 by the Spanish-language respondent. W1 City Focus question: Youth programs selected by 30% of English respondents and 67% of Spanish respondents (n=5) as a top-two focus — tied for #3 overall in English, tied for #1 in Spanish. Youth needs appeared at 5 of 6 collaboration stations without prompting.	Econ Dev’t & Ped Safety strategy maps named Active All-Weather Sports Center at Newburg ★★ and assist McLean with pool development as longer-term priorities. Youth Outreach Letter to partner organizations named as Important + High Impact on priorities matrix ★★. Youth + family oriented development: GPU to identify where and how to zone ★.

Strategic Plan Priority & Top Related Participation Themes	Com-munity Inter-views* (n=19)	Staff Inter-views* (n=19)	Council Inter-views* (n=5)	Immigrant Focus Group * Nov. 2025 (n=12)	Teen Focus Group* Dec. 2025 (n=8)	Staff Workshop 1, Nov. 2025 <i>Turned initial listening campaign results into exploratory strategic priorities</i>	Community Workshops 1-2, March & April 2026 ** (n=~150 participants) <i>Workshop products were cumulative. Participants contributed ideas via post-its and emphasis with stars for preferences about ideas shared. See photos, below.</i>	W1 Feedback Card & W1-W2 Mentimeter Polls, March-April 2026 *** (n=40: W1 feedback cards re: draft compass) n=186 162 respondents during and the week following W1 re: guiding principles; 24 respondents re: City priorities between workshops. See photos, below.	Staff Workshop 2, April 2026 <i>Priority commitments developed and Council asks named****</i>
9. Building a Communication Culture & Fortuna's Voice <i>Community in the dark about what City does and why — a solvable problem; make staff's invisible work visible; Spanish-language access as civic equity and legal obligation; proactive communication as governance accountability tool, not PR</i>	13/19 (68%)	9/19 (47%)	3/5	Strong — language barrier is the defining civic participation barrier; participants described sending children to pay water bills; not knowing Council members or City priorities; tokenism quote	Present — only hear about City via election yard signs; desire for genuine engagement ("come to us"); experience with tokenism	Present — "invisible work" outreach strategy named; staff described public as not understanding what they do; social media and communications capacity identified as a need	Comments about improving the means for community participation received the most energy at the “Our City Leadership & How We Participate” station ★22. "If people saw that their input actually mattered, they would be more likely to speak up" ★4. Staff work invisible to the public ★7. Spanish-language access named repeatedly and independently across generations: City Hall working for all Fortuna residents in their language ★★; Spanish content in Parks & Rec announcements and City news named separately. Trusted messengers (Centro del Pueblo, Black Humboldt, churches, Farmers Market booth) named as outreach strategy. Tourism/marketing ★21 in spending priorities — the public understands communication as an economic development tool.	Present — Public Communications & Engagement selected by 23% of English respondents as a top-two City Focus (W1 City Focus Mentimeter question, n=100 English). Between-workshops poll: "Fortuna needs a plan" (#2 most urgent, n=23 English) is fundamentally a communication and governance accountability finding — 66% of W1 Mentimeter respondents (n=157 English) didn't know if Fortuna has had a vision, reflecting a communication and planning. Poll in Spanish poll (n=5): include Spanish-speaking residents named a priority. Between-workshops respondent in Spanish named "online participation option" that would make participation easier — consistent with the access gap this priority addresses.	External priorities matrix, highest on the “meaningful impact” scale: Spanish Access — standardize communications to Spanish translation + interpretation ★5. Social media proactive engagement ★4; online presence for [providing] correct info ★★. Explore communications interests ★. Council role: support tax measure messaging; talking points for staff.

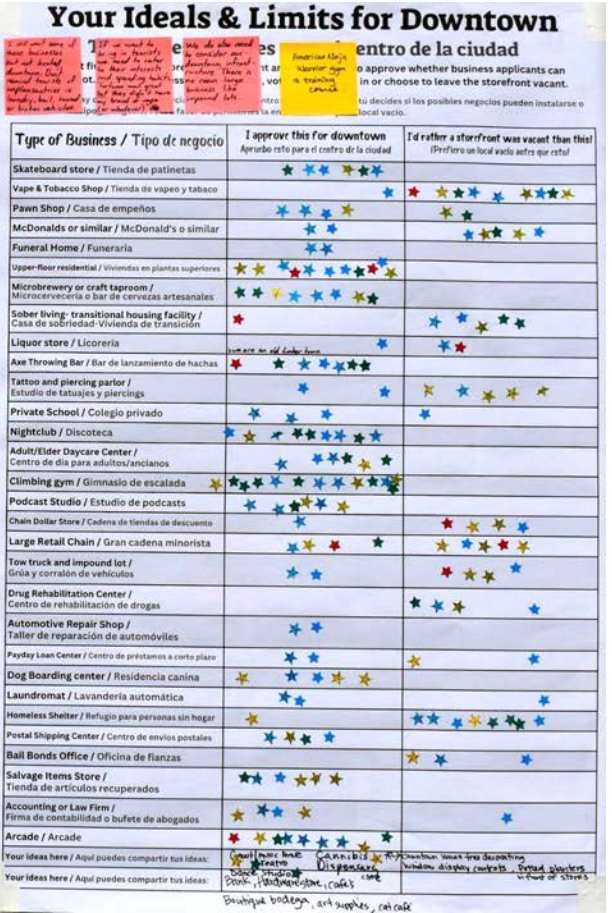
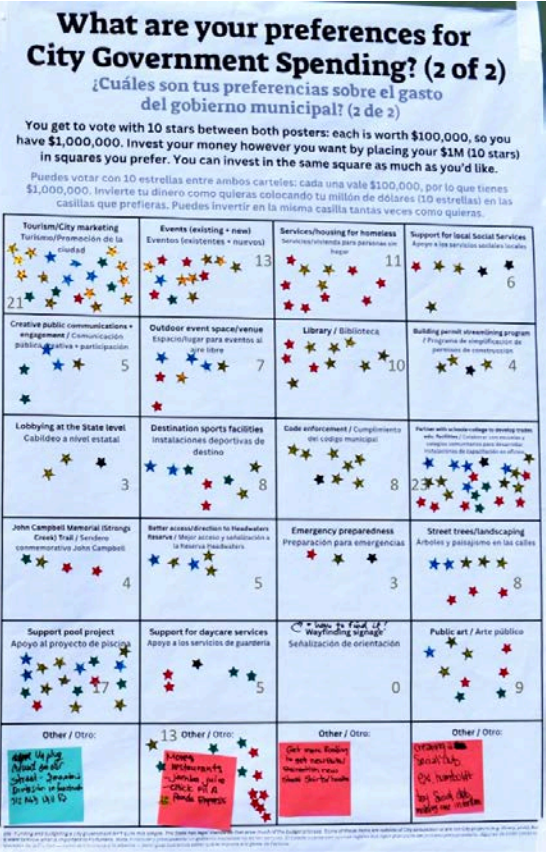
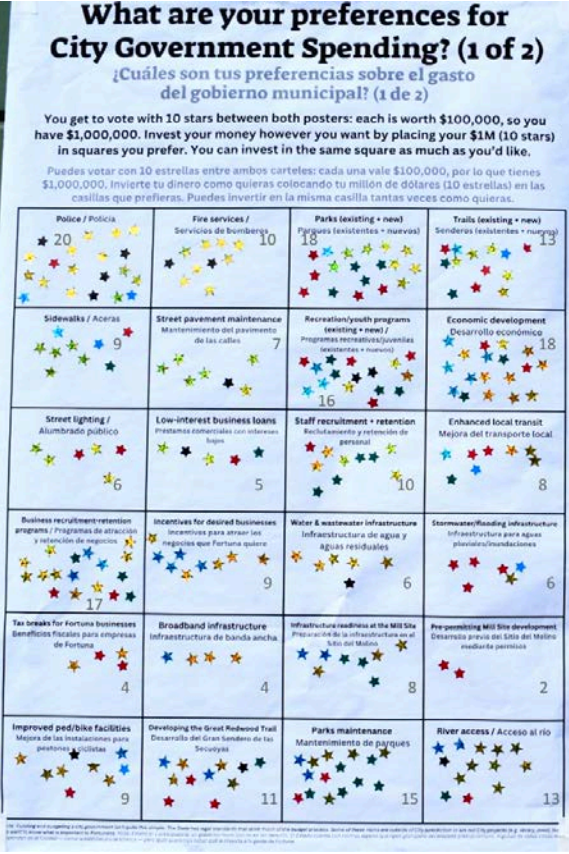
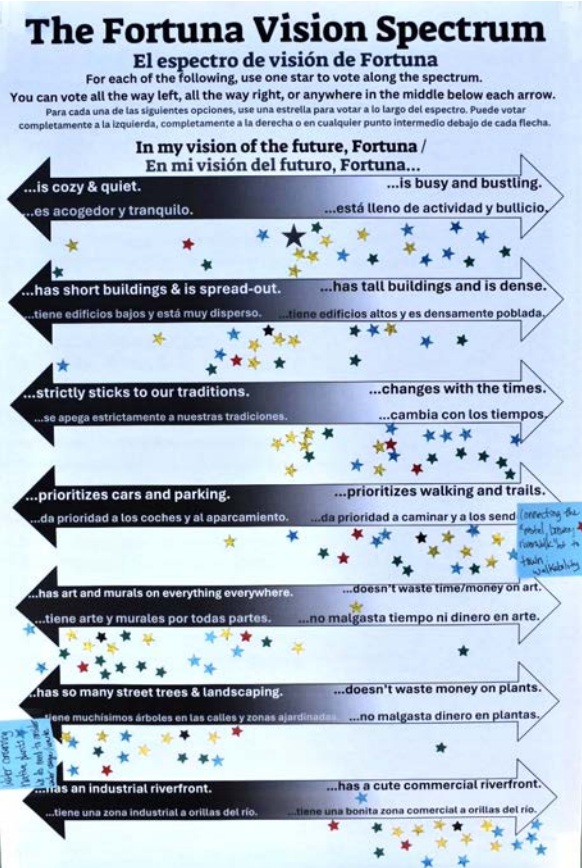
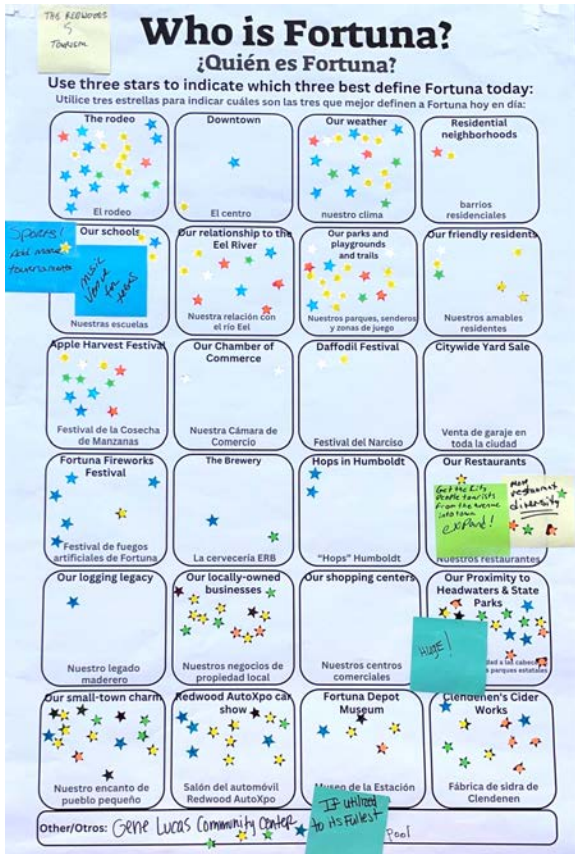
* All interviews and focus groups were based on open-ended questions that did not bring up specific issues, allowing respondents to answer in any way they deemed fit.

** While the first community workshop (W1) was designed to review listening campaign results, provide feedback about “what’s missing” from results, and test initial compass principles, and W2 was designed primarily to apply the draft compass to development of strategic/land use ideas and indications of preferences, many of the work product results generated during workshops were cumulative from both, so reporting above cannot be distinguished between the two events. Post-its and stars were color-coded by generation – primarily to visually understand interests of the youngest generations (red) since the community is so clear about their importance – however, generational differences in results are not delved into in reports.

*** Includes responses in English and Spanish. Out of 40 total W1 paper feedback surveys, there were 26 valid values rankings and 25 valid vision rankings. For the between-workshops Mentimeter poll, n=100 of 157 English W1 respondents who answered the question about priorities for City Focus. Before roughly 70 high school students weighed in on the last day the first poll was open, results were slightly different (but not fully documented before results changed quickly within hours), so the final results lean toward 55% Gen Z-Alpha participation.

**** For a description of the final staff-Council joint working session, see the Future Fortuna Workshop Results Report.

Example Images of Work Products from Community Workshops 1-2 & Associated Polls



3. The Economic Future of Our City

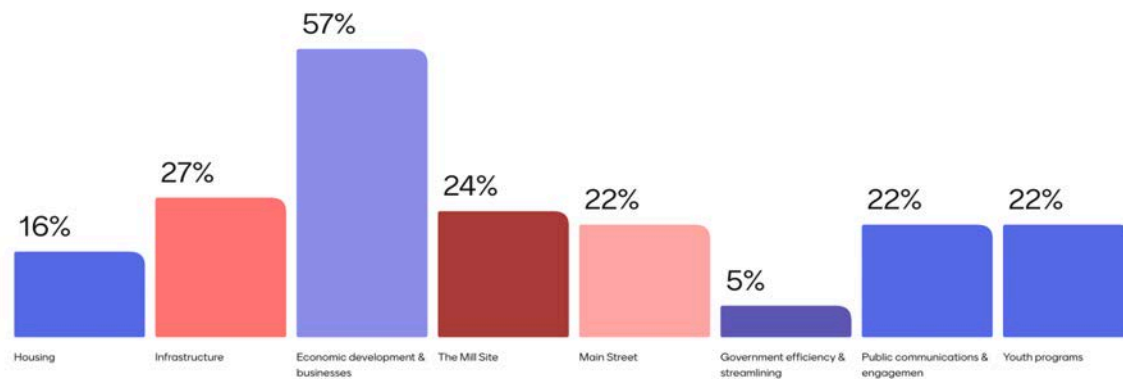
El Futuro Económico de Nuestra Ciudad



Rank these Fortuna City Values in order of importance:

- Quality of life: safety, cleanliness, family life, care for youth, parks, forests, and river
- Connected, caring community: close-knit feel, big community events, volunteering, showing up for e...
- Economic Resilience: The status quo isn't sustainable, generating City revenue is essential to keepin...
- Community Character: Keeping the historic feel, charm, and access to the outdoors, while also maki...
- Committed Service: Recognition that staff work hard, care about this community, and deserve sup...
- Clear Direction: Clear what Fortuna stands for; consistent decisions based on shared principles that...

What should be Fortuna's primary focus in the coming five to ten years (pick two)?



IMAGINA LA FORTUNA DEL FUTURO

Taller 1 de 2
Miércoles, 25 de marzo de 2026

Guía de comentarios

Esta noche, averigua qué dijeron tus vecinos y suma tu opinión.

Tus comentarios ahora darán forma a segundo taller el 11 de abril y el futuro de la ciudad para las próximas décadas.

Cómo funciona:

- Visita cualquiera de las 6 estaciones de colaboración que te interesen.
- Utilice las estrellas, las notas adhesivas y el bolígrafo incluidos para proporcionar comentarios en cada estación (o escanee el código QR para enviar sus comentarios en línea).
- Por favor, comparte tus opiniones en el reverso de esta guía y deposítala en una caja junto a la puerta antes de marcharte.

¿QUÉ VIENE AHORA?

Taller n.º 2:
Trazando un rumbo hacia la fortuna futura
Sábado, 11 de abril, 11:00-15:00
River Lodge – abre sus puertas a las 10:00

Aplicamos los principios rectores que surjan esta noche. Juntos, pongámonos manos a la obra para elaborar recomendaciones concretas sobre el futuro de Fortuna.

¿Te quedaste sin tiempo para dar tu opinión esta noche? Aún puedes escanear este código para participar en línea hasta el 31 de marzo.



La ciudad aplicará los resultados de la campaña de escucha y los talleres para:

- Proceso de elaboración del presupuesto de este año,
- Desarrollo de un Plan Estratégico, y para
- Iniciar una actualización del plan general.

Sus comentarios forman parte del registro oficial del Plan Estratégico y la Actualización del Plan General de la Ciudad de Fortuna.

¡Gracias por dedicar tu tiempo y tus ideas a Future Fortuna!

THE CITY'S "COMPASS" – PART 1

Guiding Principles: Fortuna's Compass

A compass doesn't tell you where to go, it helps you find your way once you decide, regardless of what the weather or road/trail conditions are. These guiding principles will provide a consistent guide to Fortuna's decisions for years to come.

City of Fortuna Values

The Listening Campaign found strong agreement on what Fortunans care about – across all groups and ages. Rank these City Values 1-6 (1 = most important to you):

- Quality of Life: Safety, cleanliness, family life, care for youth, parks, forests, and river
- Connected, Caring Community: Close-knit feel, big community events, volunteering, showing up for each other
- Economic Resilience: The status quo isn't sustainable; generating City revenue is essential to keeping City services
- Clear Direction: Clear what Fortuna stands for; consistent decisions based on shared principles that outlast a single leader
- Committed Service: Recognition that staff work hard, care about this community, and deserve support
- Community Character: Keeping the historic feel, charm, and access to outdoors, while also making room for growth

Is there a core value you don't see? Add what is missing here:

THE CITY'S "COMPASS" – PART 2

Fortuna's 2040 Vision

Where are we going? What does success look like? Rank points of a City Vision 1-5 (1 = most important):

- Vital, high-functioning economic engine
- Complete, connected community for all ages
- Leadership with clear direction and service
- Capable government and team that delivers
- Community and government that finds a way, and helps each other in the process

Any key things missing in this picture of Fortuna's future?

How We Decide

Before the City Council makes a major decision, what questions would you hope they ask? Examples:

- Does this help young people see a future here?
- Who benefits – and who bears the cost?
- Can we afford to do it? Can we afford not to?

What would you add?

Will young people consider building families here?

THE CITY'S "COMPASS" – PART 1

Guiding Principles: Fortuna's Compass

A compass doesn't tell you where to go, it helps you find your way once you decide, regardless of what the weather or road/trail conditions are. These guiding principles will provide a consistent guide to Fortuna's decisions for years to come.

City of Fortuna Values

The Listening Campaign found strong agreement on what Fortunans care about – across all groups and ages. Rank these City Values 1-6 (1 = most important to you):

- Quality of Life: Safety, cleanliness, family life, care for youth, parks, forests, and river
- Connected, Caring Community: Close-knit feel, big community events, volunteering, showing up for each other
- Economic Resilience: The status quo isn't sustainable; generating City revenue is essential to keeping City services
- Clear Direction: Clear what Fortuna stands for; consistent decisions based on shared principles that outlast a single leader
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Any key things missing in this picture of Fortuna's future?

Need thoughtful leadership – not same old same old

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What would you add?